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THE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

AUTHORISED EDITION.

## FOURTH SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

## 57 VICTORIÆ.

## VOLUME XXIV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE FIRST DAY OF MAY
TO
THE THIRTIETH DAY OF MAY,
1894.

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## ERRATUM.

9 *May*. Page 696, line 24 from top, "Colonel Loyd (Chatham)" read "*Mr. Wilson Lloyd (Wednesbury).*"

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**Land Transfer Bill (No. 19)—**

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

*Moved*, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly.

Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

**Pistols Bill (No. 11)—**

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read ... 3

*Moved*, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

After Observations, Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly... 5

Clause 1.

Amendment moved, "That Sub-sections 3 to 8 be struck out in order, after Sub-section 2, to insert—

(3.) A pistol may not be sold to or bought by any person unless he is licensed to sell pistols or produces on the occasion of the sale either—

(*a*) a licence or certificate authorising him either to use or carry a gun or to kill game; or

(*b*) a statement signed by him that he is an officer in the Naval or Military Service of Her Majesty; or

(*c*) a certificate from the Board of Trade, showing that he is a master or mate, or engineer, in the Merchant Service; or

(*d*) a statement signed by him that he is ordered abroad on the Public Service and is about to leave the United Kingdom for that purpose within 14 days from the date of the purchase; or

(*e*) a statement signed by him and attested by a Justice of the Peace that he is about to emigrate within 14 days from the date of the purchase; or

(*f*) in the case of a foreigner, a statement signed by him and endorsed by a consular officer for the country to which he belongs, to the effect that he is about to leave the United Kingdom within 14 days from the date of the purchase,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

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After short Debate, Amendments *agreed to* ... ... ... 8

Amendment moved, in Sub-section 4, to insert—

("(4.) A pistol, or ammunition suitable only for a pistol, may not be sold to a person apparently under the age of 18 years, or bought by a person under that age"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment moved, to omit Clauses 5 and 6, and to substitute the following :—

"(5.) On every sale of a pistol the seller must enter in a book kept by him the date of the sale, the name and address of the purchaser, and the name, mark, or number identifying the pistol, and must either cause this entry to be signed by the purchaser, or keep for production, if so required, an order signed by the purchaser.

(6.) Every seller of a pistol must retain the book so kept by him for a period of not less than five years from the date of the last entry therein, and must, while he retains the book, produce it for inspection by any officer of police or any officer of Inland Revenue on being so requested,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

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Amendment moved, to insert the following sub-section :—

"(7.) This section shall apply only in the case of the sale of a pistol by any person in the course of trade or business,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Amendment moved, in page 2, line 11, after ("age"), to insert—

("Or as to any matter which he is required by this section to state"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Remaining sub-sections agreed to with consequential and verbal Amendments.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2.

Amendment moved, in page 2, line 19, after ("gunsmith"), to insert ("ironmonger, auctioneer, marine store dealer"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendments moved, in line 21, after ("a"), to insert ("city or"), and in line 22 to leave out ("borough") and insert after ("council") the words ("of the city or borough"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendments *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 3 and 4, with consequential Amendments, *agreed to* ... ... 10

Clause 5.

Amendment moved, "To leave out the Clause,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to,* and Clause struck out ... ... 11

Clause 6.

Amendment moved, in line 14, after ("practice"), to insert—

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After short Debate, Amendment *agreed to* ... ... ... 14

Clause 7.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 18, after ("pistol"), to insert—

("For a period of five years from the date of his release"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Pistols Bill—*continued.*

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 27, to leave out

("for exportation or in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing; nor") and insert ("(*a*) for exportation, or (*b*) in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing with persons licensed under this Act to sell pistols"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to* ... ... ... ... ... 15

Amendment moved, to insert the following Sub-section :—

("(2) The sale of a pistol by its owner to a person licensed under this Act to sell pistols"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 9.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 35, at the end of the Clause to insert—

("And any other punishment imposed under this Act may be imposed on summary conviction"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 10.

Amendment moved, "To leave out the Clause,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield*) ... ... ... ... ... ... 16

Motion *agreed to;* Clause struck out.

Clause 11.

Amendment moved, "To leave out the Clause,"—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Clause struck out.

Clause 12.

Consequential Amendment.

Amendment moved,

In line 20, to insert at the end of the Clause ("'borough' shall mean a royal, parliamentary, or police burgh, and 'borough council' the provost and magistrates"),—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

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After short Debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read 2$^a$ accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday next.

**Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill** [H.L.] — *Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1$^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 41.)

**Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill** [H.L.] — *Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 42.)

**Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill** [H.L.] — *Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 43.)

**Water Orders Confirmation Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 44.)

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**Quarter Sessions Bill** [*Lords*] **(No. 162)**—Considered in Committee, and reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

**Shop Hours Act (1892) Amendment Bill (No. 189)**—Considered in Committee. Clause 1. Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

**Derelict Vessels (Reports) Bill (No. 87)**—Considered in Committee. Clause 1. Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

## *MOTIONS.*

**Railway Rates and Charges Provisional Order (Easingwold Railway, &c.) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Mundella.*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 206.]

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**Common Jurors Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Parker, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. Pease, Colonel Cotton-Jodrell*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 210.]

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**Building Societies (No. 3) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir John Lubbock, Sir Charles Hall, Mr. Byles, Mr. Picton*:)– Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 212.]

**Elections (Second Ballot) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Holland, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir James Kitson, Mr. Schwann*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 213.]

**Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill** — *Ordered* (*Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Crombie. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Renshaw*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 214.]

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Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

**Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Bill (No. 182)—**

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn,"—(*Sir H. Maxwell.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Order discharged ; Bill withdrawn.

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Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

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**Period of Qualification and Elections Bill (No. 161)—**

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And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"This House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power,"—(*Sir E. Clarke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

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**Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Dane, Colonel Nolan:*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 217.]

**Mines (Eight Hours) (Wales) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. David Thomas, Mr. Lloyd-George:*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 218.]

**Metropolis Local Management (St. Paul, Deptford) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Darling, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Boord, Mr. Benn, Mr. Pickersgill, Colonel Hughes:*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 219.]

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Motion *agreed to ;* Bill read $3^a$ accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

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**Limitation of Actions Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 39)**—Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read $3^a$ on Monday next.

**Solicitors' Examination Bill** — House in Committee (according to Order) : Bill reported without Amendment ; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Monkswell* (for *The Lord Playfair*) ; read $1^a$ ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 47.)

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**Period of Qualification and Elections Bill (No. 161)**—

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And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"This House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power,"—(*Sir E. Clarke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

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**Industrial and Provident Societies (Purchase of Fee Simple) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Lambert, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Channing, Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. David Thomas, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Crilly, Mr. Cameron Corbett*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 221.]

It being after Seven of the clock, Mr. Speaker suspended the Sitting until Nine of the clock.

EVENING SITTING.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

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Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"An humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that whenever She bestows any title or honour on any of Her subjects She will be graciously pleased to issue a statement of the services for which such honours are bestowed, in the same manner as is done when the Victoria Cross is granted,"—(*Sir W. Lawson,*)—instead thereof.

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"I have received your Address praying that I will withhold My assent to the following portion of the Flintshire Education Scheme, Clause 93, Sub-section (*b*) from the words 'boarding house' to the end, and the whole of Sub-section (*c*). I will comply with your advice" ... ... ... ... ... ... 425

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2. The number of men, other than soldiers or pensioners, who have been engaged in similar positions during the same period ;

3. The number of soldiers who have been dismissed from their positions during that period from the General Post Office service ;

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**Quarter Sessions Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 48)**—Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to, with Amendments; and Bill returned to the Commons.

**Trout Fishing (Scotland) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Lamington*); read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next. (No. 49.)

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 50.)

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Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

COMMONS—

Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed (No. 106.)

**Fishery Board (Scotland) Extension of Powers Bill (No. 174)**—Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

**Building Societies (No. 3) Bill (No. 212)**—Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, to which the Building Societies (No. 2) Bill was committed.

## *MOTIONS.*

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—

*Ordered*, That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Rates, Tolls, and Charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons.

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VOLUNTEER ACTS—

*Ordered*, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Volunteer Acts, and into the legal condition and status of Volunteers serving under these Acts.

Committee nominated.

*Ordered*, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

*Ordered*, That Five be the quorum,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn," —(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

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Motion agreed to.

## LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 8.

**Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893, Amendment Bill (No. 28)**—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read ... ... ... 577

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

Motion *agreed to* :—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

**Quarter Sessions Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 48)**—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments made by the Lords to the Amendments made by the Commons, *agreed to.*

**Charitable Trusts Acts Amendment Bill** [H.L.] (No. 12) — Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment.

**Land Transfer Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 19)**—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 52.)

**Solicitors' Examination Bill**—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 53.)

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill (No. 32)**—Read $3^a$ (according to Order), and passed.

**Trustee Act, 1893, Amendment Bill (No. 38)**—Read $3^a$ (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons ... ... 578

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—

Message from the Commons, That they have come to the following Resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House—namely, "That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under 'The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888,' containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Rates, Tolls, and Charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons." The said Message to be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

**Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (The Lord President [*E. Rosebery*]); read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 54.)

**Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill** [H.L.] — *Presented* (The Lord President [*E. Rosebery*]); read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 55.)

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS—

*Ordered*, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing Petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.

MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE—

The Lord Meldrum (*M. Huntly*) added to the Select Committee.

HIGH SHERIFFS—

*Moved*, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the fees and profits received by the High Sheriffs of counties or their deputies in the execution of their office, and the mode in which the duties of the High Sheriff now ordinarily performed by deputy may best be carried out,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*,)—agreed to.

The Lords named of the Committee ... ... ... ... 579

**Prize Courts Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 56.)

**Fishery Board (Scotland) Extension of Powers Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 57.)

## COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 8.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

**Cambridge Corporation Bill**—

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

After short discussion, Debate adjourned ... ... ... 583

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

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## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Finance Bill (No. 190)—**

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

After long Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis*) ... ... ... 690

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate further adjourned till Thursday.

**Indian Railway Companies Bill (No. 184)—**

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday, 24th May.

## *MOTION.*

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS) EXPENSES—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That there be laid before this House a Return showing detailed receipts and expenditure of Kitchen Committee for the years ending the 31st day of December, 1891, the 31st day of December, 1892, and the 31st day of December, 1893,"—(*Mr. A. C. Morton*) ... ... ... ... ... ... 691

After Observations, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of Great Northern and other Railway Companies) Bill (No. 178)** — Read a second time, and committed.

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 163)** — Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (No. 194)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 203)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Notice of Accidents Bill (No. 144)**—Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 9.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

**London County Council (General Powers) Bill** (*by Order*)—

Order for Consideration, as amended, read ... ... ... 693

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "as amended, be now considered," in order to add the words,

"Re-committed to the former Committee in respect of Clause 5 (Lighting common staircases, &c.,)"—(*Mr. Howell*) ... ... ... ... 695

Question proposed, "That the words 'as amended, be now considered,' stand part of the Question."

London County Council (General Powers) Bill—*continued.*

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 699
Main Question again proposed.
Debate adjourned till Tuesday, 22nd May.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Uniforms Bill (No. 12)—**

Order for Second Reading read.
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. H. R. Farquharson*) ... ... ... 705
After Debate, Motion *agreed to* ... ... ... ... 716
Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

**Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill (No. 14)—**

Order for Second Reading read.
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Strachey*) ... ... ... ... 720
After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 733
Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

**Rating of Machinery Bill (No. 21)—**

Order for Second Reading read.
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Coddington*) ... ... .. ... 735
After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 211; Noes 120.—(Division List, No. 42) ... ... ... ... 745
Bill read a second time.
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade,"—(*Mr. Coddington.*)
Objection being taken, and it being after half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.
Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

**Smaller Dwellings (Scotland) Bill (No. 71)—**

Order for Second Reading read ... ... ... ... 746
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. Cross.*)
After short Debate, objection being taken, Second Reading deferred till Monday, 21st May.

**Steam Trawlers (Scotland) Bill (No. 200)—**

Order for Second Reading read.
After short Debate, objection being taken, Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 30th May ... ... ... ... ... 747

**Police (Slaughter of Injured Animals) Bill (No. 208)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," (*Mr. Banbury*,)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill committed for Monday, 21st May.

**Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 207)**—Read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May ... ... ... ... ... 748

**Public Libraries (Scotland) Bill (No. 171)**—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Public Petitions Committee—Fifth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

## MOTIONS.

**Commons Regulation Provisional Order (Luton) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. H. Gardner, Sir J. T. Hibbert*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 223.]

**Importation of Prison-Made Goods Bill**—*Ordered* (*Colonel Howard Vincent, The Marquess of Carmarthen, Mr. Keir-Hardie, Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Major Rasch, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Field*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 224.]

**Foreign and Colonial Meat (Ireland) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Field, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Horace Plunkett, Mr. M'Gilligan*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 225.]

## LORDS, THURSDAY, MAY 10.

**Women's Suffrage Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Denman*); read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 61) ... ... ... ... ... 749

**Trout Fishing (Scotland) Bill** [H.L.]—Second Reading put off to Monday, the 28th instant.

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 46)**—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday, the 28th instant.

**Supreme Court of Judicature (Procedure) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 26)**—Read 3ª (according to Order); Amendments made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

**Limitation of Actions Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 39)**—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read, and discharged.

**Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893, Amendment Bill (No. 28)**—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday, the 28th instant.

**Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Playfair*); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 59 ... 750

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills—

Commons Message considered (according to Order): Moved, that this House do concur in the Resolution communicated by the Commons, viz., "That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the 'Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888,' containing the classification of merchandise traffic and the schedule of maximum rates, tolls, and charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons" (*The Lord Playfair*); agreed to; and a Message sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

**County Secretaries Superannuation (Ireland) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Castletown*) ; read 1ᵃ ; and to be printed. (No. 60.)

**Public Libraries (Scotland) Bill**—Brought from the Commons ; read 1ᵃ ; and to be printed. (No. 62.)

## COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 10.

### *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

—o—

**Cambridge Corporation Bill** *(by Order)*—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th May], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

After short Debate, Question put :—The House divided :—Ayes 145 ; Noes 112.—(Division List, No. 43)... ... ... ... 752

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Selection (Standing Committees)—Law, &c.—*Reported* from the Committee of Selection ; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure ;—Mr. Stanley Leighton ; and had appointed in substitution : Mr. Wootton Isaacson, as one of the fifteen Members added in respect of the Church Patronage Bill,—*(Sir John Mowbray)*.

Report to lie upon the Table ... ... ... ... 753

Message from the Lords—That they have agreed to,—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill, without Amendment.

Trustee Act (1893) Amendment Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Acts." [Supreme Court of Judicature (Procedure) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to the limitation of actions." [Limitation of Actions Bill [Lords].

### *QUESTIONS.*

—o—

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Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Questions, Mr. D. Thomas; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).
Mixed Trains on Irish Railways—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) ... ... 800
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Scottish Police Pension Funds—Question, Mr. Cochrane; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour).
The Irish Veterinary College Grant—Questions, Mr. W. Johnston, Mr. Carson; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... 807

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LICENCE FEES—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) ... ... ... 810

THE STRIKE AT MESSRS. BRYANT AND MAY'S—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. George Russell).

WADELAI—Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).

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THE CROFTERS ACT—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

MONEY-LENDING BANKS—Question, Mr. Yerburgh; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella).

THE FRIDAY SITTING—Question, Mr. Dalziel; Answer, Mr. Speaker ... 812

THE RECENT CRIME IN COUNTY CORK—Questions, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Arnold Forster; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

VOTE ON ACCOUNT—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... ... 814

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—

*Ordered*, That the proceedings on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House for Whitsuntide be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed,—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Finance Bill (No. 190)—**

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

After long Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 308; Noes 294.—(Division List, No. 44) ... ... ... 901

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

ADJOURNMENT (WHITSUNTIDE)—

*Resolved*, That this House at its rising do adjourn until Monday, 21st May,—(*Th Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

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### *MOTION.*

SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE, 1894—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from that portion of the Code (1894) of the Scotch Education Department which proposes to alter the ages in Section 133 of the Code from 'between 5 and 14 years of age' to 'between 3 and 15 years of age,' and until it is provided that the new arithmetical requirements under the 28th section in Standards IV., V., and VI. shall not come into operation till 1895,"—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

After short Debate, Question put :—The House divided :—Ayes 40 ; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 45) ... ... ... ... 908

SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE, 1894—Observations, Mr. A. Cross, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan).

### *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 170)**—Read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May ... ... ... 909

**Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) (Ireland) Bill (No. 41)**—Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 13th June, read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn

### *MOTIONS.*

**Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 226.]

**Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of Working Classes) (No. 2) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 227.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 228.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 229] ... 910

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 230.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 231.]

**Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 232.]

**Savings Banks (Societies) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Arnold Morley, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir J. T. Hibbert* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 233.]

**Chimney Sweepers Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Labouchere, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Maden, Mr. Jacoby* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 234.]

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## COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 21.

### QUESTIONS.

THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF DIRECTORS—Question, Mr. Barrow; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... 913

THE UGANDA DEBATE—Questions, Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL CONTROL)—Questions, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt), Mr. Speaker ... 914

THE NILE WATERWAY—Question, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).

NEW MEMBER SWORN—Robert Threshie Reid, Esquire, Q.C., for the Dumfries District of Burghs.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY.

**Parochial Electors (Registration Acceleration) Bill (No. 175)—**

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [30th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time" ... ... ... 915

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

After short Debate, Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure,"—(*Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.*)

After short Debate, Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

SUPPLY,—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (ESTIMATES), 1894-5.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £314,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services,"—(*Sir J. T. Hibbert*) ... ... ... 924

After Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £313,900, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Sir R. Temple*) ... ... ... ... ... ... 939

After Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 55; Noes 115.—(Division List, No. 46) ... ... ... ... 948

Original Question again proposed ... ... ... ... 949

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE—*continued.*

After Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £314,400, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. Hanbury*). ... ... ... ... ... 951

After short Debate, Question put :—The Committee divided :—Ayes 37 ; Noes 100.—(Division List, No. 47) ... ... ... 954

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £187,975, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

After Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B (Maintenance and Repairs) be reduced by £1,000 in respect of Burlington House,"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles*) ... ... ... 971

After Debate, Motion, by leave, withdrawn ... ... ... 974

Original Question again proposed.

After Debate, Question put, and agreed to ... ... ... 979

3. £185,210, to complete the sum for Surveys in the United Kingdom.

After Debate, Vote agreed to ... ... ... ... 993

Resolutions to be reported upon Thursday ; Committee to sit again upon Wednesday.

**Places of Worship Sites Bill (No. 90)**—Order for Second Reading read.
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)
Objection being taken, and it being after Midnight,
Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

**Locomotive (Threshing Engines) Bill (No. 183)**—Order for Second Reading read ; but objection being taken,
Second Reading deferred till To-morrow ... ... ... ... 994

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 164)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Commissioners of Works Bill (No. 196)**—Considered in Committee, and reported without Amendment ; read the third time, and passed.

**Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 207)**—Considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)
Clause 1.
Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

**Police (Slaughter of Injured Animals) Bill (No. 208)**—Considered in Committee.
(In the Committee).
Clause 1.
Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

**Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 170)**—Order for Committee read, and discharged.
Bill committed to a Select Committee.

**Public Works Loans Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir J. T. Hibbert, The Chancellor of the Exchequer* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 235.]

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS [EXPENSES]—
Considered in Committee ... ... ... ... 995

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Expenses of the Board of Trade in the execution of any Act of the present Session for providing for notice of and inquiry into Accidents occurring in certain Employments and Industries,—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS—
Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved. That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, the sum of £12,117,630 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom,—(*Sir J. T. Hibbert.*)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Estimate presented,—showing the several Services for which a further Vote on Account is required for the year ending 31st March 1895 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 123.]

## COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 22.

### *QUESTIONS.*

EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND—Question, Dr. Macgregor; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... ... 997
MELTON LEVEL CROSSING—Question, The Marquess of Granby; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).
MR. E. O'KELLY OF BALTINGLASS—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... 998
THE FISCAL FOR ROSS AND CROMARTY—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour).
FOREIGN EXPEDITIONS ON THE NILE—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) 999
THE LOSS OF THE "PENARTH"—Question, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... ... 1000
THE LOSS OF THE "HIGHBURY"—Question, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... ... 1001
TRAINING SHIPS FOR SCOTLAND AND IRELAND—Questions, Mr. Weir, Captain Donelan; Answers, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE AND THE NEW ESTATE DUTY—Questions, Sir G. Baden-Powell, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... ... ... 1002
THE GRESHAM COMMISSION—Question, Sir A. Rollit; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... 1003
EXPENSES OF NAVAL LAUNCHING—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
IRISH EDUCATION ACT—Questions, Mr. Jackson, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley)... ... 1004
MANORIAL RIGHTS AND THE RATES—Questions, Mr. A. C. Morton, Mr. Storey; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... ... ... ... ... 1006

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THE TREES IN HYDE PARK—Question, Sir C. Dilke ; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. H. Gladstone).

CORDITE—Question, Mr. Hanbury ; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... ... .. 1007

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

—o—

**Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 202)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

After long Debate, The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" ... ... 1079

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put accordingly, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Scotch Bills."

After point of Order raised, and ruling by Mr. Speaker,

Question proposed.

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1081

*Ordered*, That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Scotch Bills.

**Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill (No. 151)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

After short Debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned ... 1082

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS [EXPENSES]—

Resolution reported ;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the expenses of the Board of Trade in the execution of any Act of the present Session for providing for notice of and inquiry into Accidents occurring in certain Employments and Industries."

After short Debate, Resolution *agreed to* ... ... ... 1083

**Sea Fisheries (Scotland) Bill (No. 214)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

After short Debate, objection being taken, Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 30th May.

## *MOTIONS.*

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 236.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 237] ... 1084

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 9) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. John Morley, Sir J. T. Hibbert* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 238.]

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 10) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. John Morley, Sir J. T. Hibbert* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 239.]

**Poor Law Union Officers (Ireland) Superannuation Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Connor, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Farquharson* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 240.]

**Poor Law Guardians (Ireland) (Women) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. William Johnston* :)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 241.]

WAYS AND MEANS—
CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL—

Resolution [21st May] reported ;

"That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, the sum of £12,117,630 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolution agreed to :—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Mellor, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir J. T. Hibbert* :)—Bill presented, and read first time.

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 23.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill (No. 44)**—COMMITTEE—[*Progress, 9th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee ... ... ... ... 1085

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, to leave out Sub-section (2),—*(Mr. Hopwood.)*

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2) stand part of the Clause" ... 1086

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1087

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3),—*(Mr. Hopwood.)*

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (3) stand part of the Clause."

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1089

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 *agreed to.*

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed, in line 27, to leave out the word "able," and insert the word "liable."

Amendment *agreed to.*

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL—*continued.*

Moved, "To leave out Clause 4,"—*(Mr. George Russell.)*

Question proposed, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1098

Amendments made, and Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, to leave out Clause 5,—*(Mr. Hopwood.)*

Question proposed, "That Clause 5 stand part of the Bill" ... ... 1099

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 6.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 10, after the word "child," to insert the word "knowingly,"—*(Mr. Hopwood.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'knowingly' be there inserted" ... 1100

After Debate, Question put :—The Committee divided :—Ayes 27 ; Noes 130.—(Division List, No. 49) ... ... ... ... 1107

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 12, after the word "Act," to insert the words,

"but not excepting premises licensed for public entertainments according to law,"—(*Mr. Snape*) ... ... ... ... ... 1108

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1109

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 17, after the word "accordingly," to insert the words,

"the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution of the word 'twelve' for the word 'ten' in the first line of Sub-section (*c*) Clause 3,"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "entertainment," the words,

"not held on any premises or place licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors,"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" ... ... 1110

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1111

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section 1,—*(Mr. Hopwood.)*

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 1 stand part of the Clause" ... 1112

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1113

Other Amendments made ; Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words,

"and if a person fails to, or has failed to, pay any sum payable by him in pursuance of an Order under that sub-section, he may be dealt with in like manner as if the sum were due from him in pursuance of an Order under the Bastardy Law Amendment Act, 1872,"—(*Mr. Hopwood*) ... ... ... ... 1114

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL—*continued.*

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Other Amendments made, and Clause *agreed to* ... ... 1115

Clause 9 *agreed to.*

Clause 10.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the Clause,—*(Mr. George Russell.)*

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill" ... 1116

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1117

Formal Amendment.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 11.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section (1),—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

After short Debate, Question put, and *negatived* ... ... ... 1118

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 12 *agreed to.*

Clause 13.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

After Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 138; Noes 21.—(Division List, No. 49) ... ... ... ... 1120

After short Debate, Clause 14 withdrawn, and Clause 15 *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses and New Clauses *agreed to* ... ... ... 1121

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 242.]

**Music and Dancing Licences (Middlesex) Bill (No. 26)**—COMMITTEE—[*Progress, 18th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words,

"upon such terms and conditions, and subject to such restrictions as they by the respective licences determine,"—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause." ... ... ... ... ... 1123

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1124

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section 7,—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 7 stand part of the Clause."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill reported, without Amendment; Bill read the third time, and passed.

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**Public Buildings (London) Bill** (No. 79)—COMMITTEE—[*Progress, 2nd May.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 30, after the word "served," to insert the words,

"the Order shall not require to be confirmed by Act of Parliament,"—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1125

Other Amendments and New Clauses *agreed to* ... ... ... 1126

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 243.]

**Shop Hours Act (1892) Amendment Bill** (No. 189)—COMMITTEE—[*Progress, 1st May.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "each day's work to terminate not later than 9 p.m.,"—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause." ... ... ... ... ... 1127

After Debate, Question put, and *negatived* ... ... ... 1129

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

After short Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton*) 1130

After short Debate, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Motion to report Progress lapsed, and the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House ... ... ... ... ... 1131

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

LAND ACTS (IRELAND)—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on Land Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen Members, and that Mr. Solicitor General be added to the Committee,"—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

After short Debate, Motion agreed to.

**Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgewater, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 198)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Commons Regulation Provisional Order (Luton) Bill (No. 223)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill (No. 195)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill (No. 220)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill (No. 222)**—Read a second time, and committed ... ... ... ... ... 1132

STANDING COMMITTEES—

*Ordered*, That all Standing Committees have leave to print, and circulate with the Votes, the Minutes of their Proceedings, and any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them,—(*Mr. A. O'Connor.*)

**Merchandise Marks Acts (1887 and 1891) Amendment (Cutlery) Bill (No. 98)**—Order for Committee read, and discharged.
Bill committed to a Select Committee.

**Parliamentary Elections Bill (No. 57)**—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.
Bill withdrawn.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Members and Officers of the Local Government Board appointed in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland, and for other purposes,—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

PAROCHIAL ELECTORS (REGISTRATION ACCELERATION) [COST OF REVISING BARRISTERS]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the cost of any additional number of Revising Barristers who may be required in the present year for the purpose of accelerating the Registration of Parochial Electors in England and Wales,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

## COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 24.

### *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

**Truro and Newquay Junction Railway Bill** (*by Order*)—

Order for Consideration, as amended, read ... ... .. 1133

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Bolitho.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question" ... 1134

After long Debate,

Mr. Havelock Wilson rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, as it appeared to him that the House was prepared to come to an immediate decision ... ... ... ... ... ... 1149

Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 69; Noes 290.—(Division List, No. 50.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Consideration, as amended, put off for six months.

## *QUESTIONS.*

OVERCROWDING IN LONDON BOARD SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).
SHEERNESS NAVAL GUNNERY ESTABLISHMENT—Questions, Admiral Field, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Sir A. Rollit, Mr. Heneage, Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir J. Lubbock; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) ... ... ... ... ... 1150
REGIMENTAL CANTEENS IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. W. Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... 1153
CAVAN LAND COMMISSION APPEALS—Questions, Mr. Knox, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Dane; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
CANADIAN CATTLE TRADE—Question, Mr. Chaplin; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner) ... ... ... 1154
IRISH FISHERIES—Question, Mr. Seymour Keay; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... 1155
WATER-TIGHT BULKHEADS ON BATTLESHIPS—Question, Admiral Field; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
BOMBAY AGRICULTURISTS' GRIEVANCES—Question, Sir W. Wedderburn; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) ... 1157
SUNDAY LABOUR IN FACTORIES—Question, Mr. Brunner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. George Russell).
MILITARY PENSIONS—Question, Colonel Lockwood; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... ... 1158
THE "SOBRIETY" FATALITY—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... 1159
IRISH BANKRUPTCY ADMINISTRATION—Question, Mr. Ross; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
POSTAL APPOINTMENTS IN DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Ross; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... ... 1160
IRISH RESIDENT MAGISTRATES—Question, Dr. Robert Ambrose; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
PAUPER DISTRICT SCHOOLS—Question, Sir J. Gorst; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... ... 1161
MISCHIEVOUS SOLDIERS—Question, Mr. Laurence Hardy; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman).
PARISH COUNCILS REGISTER—Question, Mr. Brunner; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... ... 1162
MILITARY TROUBLES AT AGRA—Question, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).
MARINES AT FOREIGN STATIONS—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. Power; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... 1163
EX-INSPECTOR RUFF—Question, Sir A. Rollit; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. George Russell).
COLONIAL OFFICERS AND MILITARY APPOINTMENTS—Question, Mr. Hogan; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... 1164
ADMIRALTY TENDERS—Questions, Sir F. Seager Hunt; Answers, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth) ... ... 1165
COMPOUND HOUSEHOLDERS' GRIEVANCES—Questions, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

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THE COMMITTEE ON THE MANNING OF SHIPS—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... 1166

AGRARIAN RIOTS IN ASSAM—Question, Sir W. Wedderburn; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).

MR. JOHN DILLON'S BALLYBROOD SPEECH—Questions, Mr. Ross; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... 1167

THE ROYAL ACADEMY—Question, Sir A. Rollit; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) ... ... ... 1169

COED-Y-PAIN SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).

POSTAL CONFERENCE IN CANADA—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) 1170

MUNSTER SQUARE SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Graham; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).

CORDITE—Questions, Mr. Lough, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... ... 1171

THE SEIZURE OF THE "BLUEJACKET"—Questions, Mr. Clarence Smith, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... ... ... ... ... 1172

SCOTCH INSPECTORS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan).

THE SALTCOATS CROFTER SETTLEMENT—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... 1173

DUNPHAIL RAILWAY ACCIDENT—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

FISHING LICENCES IN SCOTLAND—Questions, Mr. Weir, Dr. Macgregor; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... 1174

DANISH SMOKELESS POWDER—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... ... 1175

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THE FORRES BOROUGH AUDITORSHIP—Questions, Mr. Beith; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan).

THE AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACT—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... 1177

IMPORTED MEAT—Question, Mr. J. W. Lowther; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner).

THE LONDON CAB STRIKE—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. George Russell) ... 1178

POLICE EVIDENCE OF DRUNKENNESS—Question, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. George Russell).

INSANITY IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. J. Redmond; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... 1179

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THE AMERICAN MAIL ROUTE—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... ... ... 1182

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Military Service in South Africa—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) 1183

Liverpool Boundaries—Questions, Mr. Forwood, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre).

Weather Forecasts for Farmers—Question, Mr. Strachey; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner) ... ... 1184

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Agricultural Depression in Essex—Questions, Mr. Round, Mr. Dodd, Captain Naylor-Leyland, Major Rasch; Answers, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner), The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

Results Fees in Scotch Schools—Question, Mr. Maxwell; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... ... 1186

The Balfour Companies—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Solicitor General (Mr. R. T. Reid) ... ... ... ... 1187

Irish Church Temporalities Fund—Questions, Mr. Knox; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

Income Tax on Labourers' Cottages in Ireland—Question, Mr. E. Barry; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... 1188

The New Estate Duty—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... 1189

Cabinet Ministers' Salaries—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

Public Trustees—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).

Welsh Disestablishment Bill—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... 1190

Lighthouse Illuminants—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

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## *MOTION.*

**Irish Education Bill—**

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend and explain 'The Irish Education Act, 1892,'"—(*Mr. J. Morley*) ... ... ... ... ... 1197

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to* ... ... ... 1200

Bill ordered (*Mr. J. Morley, Sir J. T. Hibbert*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 247.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Finance Bill** (**No. 190**)—

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill into two parts, and in the first place to report to the House the portion relating to Customs and Inland Revenue,"—(*Sir J. Lubbock*) ... ... ... ... 1203

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 121; Noes 161.—(Division List, No. 51) ... ... ... ... 1218

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*) ... 1219

After Debate, Mr. Channing rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" ... ... ... ... 1235

Question put, "That the Question be now put":—The Committee divided:—Ayes 221; Noes 176.—(Division List, No. 52) ... ... 1236

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 195; Noes 239.—(Division List, No. 53.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 be postponed,"—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

After short Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 222; Noes 258.—(Division List, No. 54) ... ... ... 1240

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, after the word "every," to insert the words "succession to property arising upon the death of every,"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" ... ... 1241

After Debate, Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Bartley*) ... 1251

The Committee divided:—Ayes 186; Noes 217.—(Division List, No. 55.)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 212.—(Division List, No. 56.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... 1252

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY—Resolutions [21st May] reported—

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (ESTIMATES), 1894-5.

CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £314,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

After short Debate, Resolution *agreed to* ... ... ... 1254

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE—*continued.*

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £187,975, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."
3. "That a sum, not exceeding £185,210, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Survey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith."

Resolutions *agreed to.*

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (No. 194)**—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 163)**—Reported with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow ... ... ... ... ... ... 1255

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 203)**—Reported with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill (No. 191)**—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 7) Bill (No. 192)**—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 8) Bill (No. 193)**—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

**Building Societies (No. 2) Bill (No. 157) and Building Societies (No. 3) Bill (No. 212)**—Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, &c.
Leave to the Committee to make a Special Report.
Special Report brought up, and read.

**Building Societies (No. 2) Bill**—As amended in the Standing Committee, to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 246.]

**Building Societies (No. 3) Bill**—Reported, without Amendment.
Special Report and other Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 130.]
Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 130.]

**Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill**—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow at Two of the clock ... ... ... ... 1256

## *MOTIONS.*

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill**—*Ordered (Mr. Burt, Sir J. T. Hibbert:)*—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 244.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 16) Bill**—*Ordered (Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre:)*—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 245.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES]—

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Members and Officers of the Local Government Board appointed in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland, and for other purposes,"—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Resolution agreed to.

PAROCHIAL ELECTORS (REGISTRATION ACCELERATION) [COST OF REVISING BARRISTERS]—

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the cost of any additional number of Revising Barristers who may be required in the present year for the purpose of accelerating the Registration of Parochial Electors in England and Wales."—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution agreed to.

And, it being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

## COMMONS, FRIDAY, MAY 25.

MORNING SITTING—

### *PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.*

**Railway Rates and Charges Provisional Order (Easingwold Railway, &c.) Bill** (*by Order*) (**No.** 206)—

Order for Second Reading read ... ... ... ... 1257

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now" and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question" ... 1258

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 147; Noes 12.—(Division List, No. 57) ... ... ... 1259

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed.

### *QUESTIONS.*

VENEZUELAN IMPORT DUTIES — Questions, Colonel Howard Vincent; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).

IRISH POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION—Questions, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... ... ... ... 1260

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THE CURRENCY OF BRITISH HONDURAS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton).
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COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... 1270
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RAILWAY RATES—Notice of Motion for Adjournment (Sir J. Whitehead).

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (SECOND VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,897,350, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, viz."—(*For details of the Estimates see Debates*) ... ... ... ... ... 1286

THE KITCHEN COMMITTEE—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £12,000, House of Commons Offices, be reduced by £2,000,"—(*Mr. A. C. Morton*) ... 1288

After Debate,

Colonel Lockwood rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" ... ... ... ... ... 1298

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

THE CAB STRIKE—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £6,500, for the Home Office, be reduced by £500, in respect of the Salary of the Home Secretary,"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

After Debate, Motion, by leave, withdrawn ... ... ... 1310

Original Question again proposed.

SIAM—NEWFOUNDLAND—

After Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £6,500, for the Colonial Office, be reduced by £10,"—(*Mr. A. C. Morton*) ... ... ... ... ... 1324

After short Debate, Motion, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1327

Original Question again proposed.

After short Debate,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"... ... ... ... 1328

Question put, "That the Question be now put":—The Committee divided:—Ayes 221; Noes 116.—(Division List, No. 58.)

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

It being Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House at Nine of the clock.

EVENING SITTING—

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

SUPPLY—*Resolved*, That this House will again resolve itself into a Committee of Supply ... ... ... ... ... 1329

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (EXPENSES)—

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"In the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under 'The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Act, 1875,'"—(*Mr. J. Rowlands.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question" ... ... ... ... ... 1341

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 39; Noes 166.—(Division List, No. 59) ... ... ... ... 1361

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under "The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Act, 1875."

SUPPLY—Committee upon Monday next.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill (No. 191)**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 7) Bill (No. 192)**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 8) Bill (No. 193)**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill (No. 194)**—Read the third time, and passed.

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**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 163)**—As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 203)**—As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

**Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 215)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill (No. 226)**—Read a second time, and committed ... ... ... ... ... 1362

**Local Government Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes) (No. 2) Bill (No. 227)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill (No. 228)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (No. 229)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill (No. 230)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) Bill (No. 232)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill**—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

STANDING COMMITTEES—Report from Chairmen's Panel,—(*Sir H. James*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Reports from the Standing Committees on Scotland, Trade, &c., Law, &c.,—(*Sir J. Mowbray.*)

Reports to lie upon the Table ... ... ... ... 1363

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS—

Resolution of the House of the 8th day of May relative to Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills, which was ordered to be communicated to the Lords, and the Message from the Lords of the 10th day of May, signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution, read;

*Ordered*, That the following Bills be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, nominated by the Committee of Selection, to be joined with a Committee of Five Lords:—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of Great Northern and other Railway Companies) Bill.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgewater, &c., Canals) Bill.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c., Canals) Bill.

*Ordered*, That all Petitions in favour of or against the Bills or Orders scheduled thereto presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard in favour of or against the Bills, and Counsel heard in support of the Bills.

*Ordered*, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that the said Bills have been committed to Five Members of this House, to be joined with a Committee of Five Lords, pursuant to the Resolution of the House relative to Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills of the 8th day of May, and to the Message from the Lords of the 10th day of May signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution,—(*Mr. Burt.*)

## *MOTIONS.*

——o——

**Local Government Provisional Order (No. 17) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 248.]

**Political Offices Pension Act (1869) Repeal Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. A. C. Morton, Mr. William Allan, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Molloy, Mr. Stewart Wallace*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 249.]

**Wine and Beerhouse Acts Amendment Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Courtney, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Crosfield, Mr. Snape, Mr. Herbert Roberts*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 250.]

**Agricultural Holdings Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Hugh Hoare, Mr. Billson, Mr. Luttrell*:) —Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 251.]

## LORDS, MONDAY, MAY 28.

New Peer—The Right Honourable Sir Charles Russell, G.C.M.G., late Her Majesty's Attorney General, having been appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary under the provisions of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, with the dignity of a Baron for life, by the style and title of Baron Russell of Killowen in the County of Down—Was (in the usual manner) introduced ... ... ... ... ... ... 1365

Irish Church Fund—Observations, The Earl of Belmore.

**Trout Fishing (Scotland) Bill** [H.L.] (**No. 49**)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved "That the Bill be now read $2^a$,"—(*The Lord Lamington.*)

After short Debate, Motion agreed to; Bill read $2^a$ accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow ... ... 1366

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill**—House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived, and Bill to be read $3^a$ To-morrow.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills—
Message from the Commons, That they have appointed a Committee to consist of five Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider the following Bills, viz.:—Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of Great Northern and other Railway Companies) Bill; Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgewater, &c., Canals) Bill; Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdeen, &c., Canals) Bill; and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House ... ... 1367

**Merchandise Marks Act (1887) Amendment Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl of Denbigh*); read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 66.)

**Perjury Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 67.)

**Commissioners of Works Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 68.)

**Music and Dancing Licences (Middlesex) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; and to be printed. (No. 69.)

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 70.)

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 6) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 71.)

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 7) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 72.)

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 8) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 73.)

Business of the House—Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered To-morrow, in order to its being dispensed with for that day's Sitting ... 1368

*Ordered.* That the Evening Sitting To-morrow do commence at a quarter past Four o'clock.

## COMMONS, MONDAY, MAY 28.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

**Thames Conservancy Bill** (*by Order*)—

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Thames Conservancy Bill that they have power to insert in the Bill, if they think fit, provisions for authorising the Conservancy to dredge portions of the River Thames and the estuary thereof below Yantlet Creek, in the County of Kent,"—(*Sir T. Sutherland.*)

After Debate, Question put :—The House divided :—Ayes 269 ; Noes 112.—(Division List, No. 60) ... ... ... ... 1387

## *QUESTIONS.*

Army Schoolmasters' Pensions—Question, Colonel Howard Vincent ; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... 1388

Workmen's Tickets—Questions, Mr. Dodd ; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

Communication with the West Coast of Ross-shire—Questions, Mr. Weir ; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... 1389

Flannan Islands Lighthouse—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

Harbours in the Island of Lewis—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... ... 1390

Vivisection—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).

Food Adulteration—Question, Mr. Kearley ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... ... 1391

Edinburgh Museum—Question, Mr. Paul ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland) ... ... ... ... 1392

Tithe Disputes in Wales—Questions, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Stanley Leighton ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).

The Royal Review at Aldershot—Questions, Major Rasch, Mr. Hanbury ; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... ... ... ... 1394

Glasgow Shipowners' Associations and the Manning of the Mercantile Marine—Question, Mr. Baird ; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

Cricket in Phœnix Park, Dublin—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Dane ; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) ... 1395

The Transvaal Republic—Question, Mr. Cayzer ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) ... ... 1397

Alleged Racing by Atlantic Liners—Questions, Mr. Cohen ; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).

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ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) ... ... 1398
SECOND DIVISION ADMIRALTY CLERKS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) ... ... 1399
PUBLIC RIGHTS ON THE THAMES—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, The Parliamentary Charity Commissioner (Mr. F. S. Stevenson).
PORTHAHAVEN LIGHTHOUSE—Question, Sir D. Macfarlane; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... ... 1400
ARMAGH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM LOAN—Question, Mr. Barton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).
KILLYBEGS PIER—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) ... ... ... 1401
LONDON POLICE AND FATAL ACCIDENTS—Question, Mr. Lough; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).
THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TUBERCULOSIS — Question, Mr. Chaplin; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... ... ... ... ... 1402
THE IMPRISONMENT OF AMELIA GIFFORD — Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).
OUTRAGES IN A DONEGAL CHURCHYARD—Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... 1403
SAMOA—Question, Mr. J. A. Pease; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... ... ... 1404
ADMIRALTY BOLT AND NUT CONTRACTS—Questions, Mr. Lloyd; Answers, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
FRENCH CANALS—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... ... ... 1405
SIR RICHARD SANKEY—Questions, Mr. Knox, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).
POST OFFICE BELT, &c., CONTRACT—Questions, Mr. Boulnois; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... ... 1406
IRISH RAILWAY RATES FOR BACON AND PORK — Question, Mr. Ross; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).
WELSH CATHEDRALS—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 1407
POST OFFICE ADMINISTRATION—Question, Captain Naylor-Leyland; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley).
LAND TITLES IN CEYLON—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) ... ... 1408
THE CASE OF MEHDI HASSAN—Question, Mr. Seymour Keay; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).
FURIOUS CYCLE RIDING—Questions, Mr. Rawson Shaw, Lord R. Churchill; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) 1409
WAGE EARNERS AND TRADE UNIONS—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... ... 1410
JABEZ SPENCER BALFOUR—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... 1411
THE ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF THE MATABELE WOUNDED—Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton).
PRISON ADMINISTRATION—Questions, Mr. Gully, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).
WIMBLEDON RIFLE RANGE—Question, Mr. Macdona; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... ... 1413

The Importation of Foreign Bottles—Question, Mr. Macdona; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).
The Smearing of Mango Trees in Behar—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) 1414
Mixed Trains on Irish Railways—Question, Mr. Bodkin; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).
Recruiting in British Colonies—Questions, Mr. J. A. Pease, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... ... ... ... ... 1415
School Attendance in Scotland—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... 1416
Lunatics in Belfast Workhouse—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
Fees on Appointment of Magistrates—Question, Mr. Brunner; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 1417
Insanitary Steamers on the Scotch Coast—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... 1418
Magistracy, Co. Tipperary—Question, Mr. Mandeville; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
Army Medical Department Report—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman).
Railway Men as Board of Trade Inspectors—Questions, Mr. Channing; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... 1419
The Saltcoats Crofter Settlement—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan)... ... ... 1420
British Sphere of Influence in East Africa—Questions, Sir G. Baden-Powell, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).
Derelict Land in Essex—Question, Major Rasch; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) ... ... 1422
Fur Seal Fisheries—Question, Sir G. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir J. Rigby).
Trade with the Colonies—Question, Colonel Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton).
The Course of Public Business—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Lord R. Churchill, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... ... ... ... 1423
Canadian Cattle—Questions, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Jeffreys; Answers, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner) ... ... 1424
The Irish Church Fund—Question, Mr. Knox; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... ... 1425

## *MOTION.*

—o—

Adjournment of the House—Manufacture of Explosives (Waltham Abbey)—

Colonel Lockwood, Member for West Essex, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—

> "The imminent danger to life and property to which the workmen employed in the manufacture of explosives in the Government Manufactory at Waltham Abbey and the inhabitants of the district generally are daily exposed, and to the ineffectual precautions against accident,"

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—MANUFACTURE OF EXPLOSIVES (WALTHAM ABBEY)—*continued.*

but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen ... 1426

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Colonel Lockwood.*)

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 139; Noes 184.—(Division List, No. 61) ... ... ... 1452

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Finance Bill (No. 190)**—COMMITTEE—[*Progress, 24th May*]—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, after the word "person," to insert the words "domiciled in the United Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted"

After Debate, Question put, and negatived ... ... ... 1470

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, to leave out the words "commencement of this Part," and insert the word "passing,"—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

After Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1472

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the words "the principal value of,"—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'the' stand part of the Clause" ... 1474

After Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1494

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the word "principal."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question put, "That the word 'principal' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 216; Noes 189.—(Division List, No. 62.)

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour,*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

**Indian Railway Companies Bill (No. 184)**—

Order for Committee read.

After short Debate, Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 3.

After short Debate, Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Thursday ... ... ... ... 1496

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS CODE, 1894—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that She will direct the New Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools to be amended in the following particulars, namely:—

Page 16 (Association of workers), to leave out "2. Working men's co-operative societies, their work in distribution and production."

Page 17, leave out "the services rendered by retail shopkeepers, merchants, manufacturers, and other persons engaged in distribution and production,"—(*Sir R. Temple.*)

After Debate, Question put, and negatived ... ... ... 1502

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill (No. 163)**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill (No. 203)**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill**—Read the third time, and passed.

**Public Works Loans Bill (No. 235)**—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

**Police (Slaughter of Injured Animals) Bill (No. 208)**—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

## *MOTIONS.*

**Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Bryce*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 252.]

**Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Bryce*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 253.]

**Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 6) (River Lee, &c.) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Burt, Mr. Bryce*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 254.]

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 11) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. J. Morley, Sir J. T. Hibbert*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 255] ... 1503

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 12) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. J. Morley, Sir J. T. Hibbert*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 256.]

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 18) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir W. Foster, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 257.]

**Supreme Court of Judicature (Procedure) Bill** [*Lords*]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 258.]

**Merchandise Marks (Prosecutions) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. H. Gardner, Sir J. T. Hibbert, Mr. Burt*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 259.]

**Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. H. Gardner, The Attorney General, The Lord Advocate*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 260.]

## LORDS, TUESDAY, MAY 29.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

*Moved*, "That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its being dispensed with for this day's sitting,"—(*The Marquess of Ripon*) ... ... ... 1505

Motion *agreed to.*

**Trout Fishing (Scotland) Bill (No. 49)**—

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

*Moved*, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly.

Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

**Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893, Amendment Bill (No. 28)**—

Read 3ª (according to Order) ... ... ... ... 1506

Formal Amendments *agreed to.*

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Religious Instruction in Board Schools—

*Moved* for, "Return of the regulations with regard to religious instruction of the School Boards for England and Wales,"—(*The Lord Colchester*) ... ... 1507

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to.*

*Ordered* to be laid before the House.

**Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 41)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 42)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 43)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Water Orders Confirmation Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 44)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill** [H.L.]—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 47)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill** [H.L.] **(No. 50)**—Read 2ª (according to Order).

**Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with for this day's sitting) Bill read 2ª; Committee negatived; Bill read 3ª, and passed.

**Police (Slaughter of Injured Animals) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed. (No. 74) ... ... ... ... ... 1508

**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 75.)

**Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill**—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed. (No. 76.)

## COMMONS, TUESDAY, MAY 29.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

—o—

**London County Council (General Powers) Bill** (*by Order*)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th May], "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL—*continued.*

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill considered.

New Clause—

(Part III.—Lighting of Common Staircases).

"5. The owner of any building designed for use in flats, or tenements, of which any staircase or passage is used in common by occupants of different flats or tenements, and is open at night, shall be bound to light every such staircase and passage and to keep the same lighted from sunset to sunrise on every night to the satisfaction of the lighting authority of the parish or district in which it is situate, who may, by an order under their seal, prescribe the amount of light and the position of any lights to be provided, and may serve notice of such order upon the owner of the premises.

"Any owner failing to comply with the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty of not exceeding five pounds for every night in which he shall have so failed.

"Any lighting authority may, by agreement with the owner of any such building, undertake the provision and maintenance of the lamps and fittings and the lighting and extinguishing of lamps on such terms as may be agreed between them,"—(*Mr. Naoroji,*) ... ... ... ... ... ... 1509

—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time" ... ... ... ... ... ... 1510

After Debate, Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1516

New Clause.

Clause 14A—

(Power to contribute towards purchase of land adjoining Paddington Recreation Ground.)

"The Council may, if they think fit, expend on capital account a sum of money not exceeding £6,000 as a contribution towards the cost of acquiring land adjoining and to be added to the Paddington Recreation Ground, authorised by 'The Paddington Recreation Ground Act, 1893,'"—(*Mr. J. Stuart,*)

—brought up, and read the first and second time, and added.

Other Amendments agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time.

**Newcastle and Gateshead Water Bill** [*Lords*] (*by Order*)—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Seton-Karr.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question" ... 1521

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and committed.

## *QUESTIONS.*

DOG LICENCES IN SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) ... ... ... ... 1523

TITHES IN ESSEX—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner) ... ... ... 1524

EQUIPMENT OF HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) ... 1525

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TITHE REDEMPTION AT RHYL—Question, Mr. S. Smith; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner).
THE PROHIBITION OF MEETING AT KILFENORA, CO. CLARE—Questions, Mr. W. Redmond; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... ... ... ... 1526
ORDNANCE STORES AT MALTA AND GIBRALTAR—Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) ... 1527
CORDITE AND THE LEE-METFORD RIFLE—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman).
DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES IN LONDON MUSIC HALLS—Question, Mr. Macdona; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... ... ... ... ... 1528
PENSION REGULATIONS—A HARD CASE—Questions, Mr. Field; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman).
CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... 1529
VACANCIES IN THE DUBLIN TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley).
SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY—Question, Sir F. Mappin; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland) ... 1530
ALLEGED LARCENIES BY POLICE ON THE DE FREYNE ESTATE—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
IRISH POOR LAW UNION FINANCE—Question, Mr. Ross; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... 1531
RETURNING OFFICERS' CHARGES AT THE GENERAL ELECTION—Questions, Sir H. Meysey-Thompson; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).
IRISH ASYLUM BOARDS—Questions, Mr. J. Hammond; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) ... ... ... 1532
EXTRA POSTAGE CHARGES IN LONDON—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... 1533
PLEURO-PNEUMONIA IN CANADIAN CATTLE—Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner).
FOUL AIR ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt) ... ... 1534
BOILER EXPLOSIONS IN LONDON—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Burt).
IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOANS—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).
GERMAN SPIRITS AND IRISH WHISKY—Questions, Mr. Field; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... 1535
RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL—Questions, Sir J. Whitehead, Mr. Channing; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).
DEBATES ON INDIAN QUESTIONS—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... 1536
POLITICAL PENSIONS—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt).
EXAMINATIONS FOR THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE—Questions, Mr. Paul, Mr. Caine; Answers, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).
PORTMAHOMACK HARBOUR—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... ... ... 1538
PAUPER LUNATICS IN IRELAND—Question, Mr. Shiress Will; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan).

SENTENCES FOR CRUELTY TO ANIMALS—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 1539

SCOTCH MAGISTRATES AND LICENSING QUESTIONS—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan).

DUES IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA—Question, Mr. Lawrence; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) ... 1540

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE FOR THE SMALL ISLES, INVERNESS-SHIRE—Questions, Dr. Macgregor; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) 1541

EXAMINATIONS UNDER THE NEW CODE—Question, Mr. J. Wilson (Lanark, Govan); Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... 1542

CIVILIAN BOOTMAKERS IN THE ARMY—Question, Mr. Dodd; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) ... ... 1543

COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

DEPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS FROM SCOTLAND—Question, Mr. Dane; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... ... 1544

THE LEITRIM MAGISTRACY—Question, Mr. Tully; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

CRIEFF POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS—Question, Sir D. Macfarlane; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) ... ... ... 1545

LUNATICS IN THE LARNE WORKHOUSE—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) ... ... ... 1546

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—

*Ordered*, That the Proceedings on the Report from the Committee of Supply, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order Sittings of the House.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Finance Bill (No. 190)**—COMMITTEE—[*Progress 28th May.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after the word "value," to insert the words "ascertained as hereinafter provided,"—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Amendment *agreed to* ... ... ... ... ... 1547

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after the word "value," to insert the words "as set forth in the Inland Revenue affidavit,"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" ... ... 1549

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the word "all," and insert the words—

"The benefit accruing to any person on the death of the deceased in any,"—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'all' stand part of the Clause" ... 1558

After long Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 199.—(Division List, No. 63) ... ... ... 1610

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

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SUPPLY—Resolution [25th May] reported ... ... ... 1611

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (SECOND VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,897,350, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895."—[See page 1286.]

Importation of Canadian Cattle—Liverpool Wards—Debate thereon.

Question put, and *agreed to* ... ... ... ... 1634

Evening Continuation Schools Code, 1894—Motion for an Address—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that She will cause the Evening Continuation Schools Code to be amended in the following particulars:—

(1) Only one marking of the registers of attendance to be required during one session of the school;

(2) In Article 13 the arrangement of a fixed grant, plus variable grants, to be replaced by one grant and that a fixed one; and

(3) The drawing to be inspected and tested in like manner to the other subjects of the Code,"—(*Sir R. Temple.*)

After short Debate, Question put, and *negatived* ... ... ... 1635

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill (No. 231)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Wemyss, &c., Water Provisional Order Bill (No. 158)**—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Message from the Lords—

That they have agreed to,—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill.

**Market Gardeners' Compensation Bill (No. 81)**—Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

## *MOTIONS.*

**Burgh Police (Scotland) Act (1892) Amendment Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dunn, Mr. John Wilson* (*Govan*), *Mr. Renshaw, Mr. Parker Smith:*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 261.]

Dairy Products Adulteration—

*Ordered*, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of "The Margarine Act, 1887," and "The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875," and any Acts amending the same, and report whether any, and, if so what, amendments of the Law relating to adulteration are in their opinion desirable,"—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Public Libraries (Ireland) Act Amendment Bill—

The Select Committee on Public Libraries (Ireland) Act Amendment Bill was nominated of,—Mr. Michael Austin, Mr. Barton, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Field, Sir Walter Foster, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. James O'Connor, Sir Francis Powell, and Mr. Ross.

*Ordered*, That Three be the quorum,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis*) ... ... ... 1636

Parochial Electors Registration Acceleration Bill—

The Select Committee on the Parochial Electors Registration Acceleration Bill was nominated of,—Mr. Billson, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Mr. Long, Mr. Storey, Mr. James Stuart, and Mr. Wharton.

*Ordered* That Three be the quorum,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

UNIFORMS BILL—

The Select Committee on the Uniforms Bill was nominated of,—Mr. Bennett, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Crosfield, Mr. Heneage, Captain Grice-Hutchinson, Colonel Naylor-Leyland, Major Rasch, Sir Thomas Robinson, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Sweetman, and Mr. Woodall.

*Ordered*, That Three be the quorum,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MAY 30.

**Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill (No. 242)—**

Bill, as amended, considered. ... ... ... ... 1637

New Clause—

(Where parent twice convicted.)

"Where, upon the second conviction of the parents or parent of any child for any offence, such child has been admitted into any workhouse provided under any of the Acts relating to the relief of the poor, or has been handed over to the custody of the Parochial Authorities, such parent or parents shall not thereafter be entitled to apply to have the said child discharged or removed therefrom, nor in any way to interfere with the upbringing or education of the said child, until it has attained the age of 12 years,"—(*Mr. J. Wilson, Lanark, Govan,*)

—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

After Debate, Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn ... ... 1643

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3),—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (3) stand part of the Bill" ... 1645

After short Debate, Question put, and *negatived* ... ... 1651

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 9, to leave out the words "any punishment under that section," and insert the word "imprisonment,"—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause" ... ... ... ... ... 1654

After short Debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 20, to leave out from the word "that," to the word "husband," inclusive, in line 24, and insert the words—

"(a) An order for the detention of a person in a retreat shall not be made under this section unless that person, having had such notice as the Court deems sufficient of the intention to allege habitual drunkenness, consents to the order being made; and

"(b) if the wife or husband of such person, being present at the hearing of the charge, objects to the order being made, the Court shall, before making the order, take into consideration any representation made to it by the wife or husband; and

"(c) before making the order the Court shall to such extent as it may deem reasonably sufficient, be satisfied that provision will be made for defraying the expenses of such person during detention in a retreat,"—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill," put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out paragraph (a),—(*Mr. Grant Lawson*) ... ... ... ... 1656

Question proposed, "That paragraph (a) stand part of the proposed Amendment."

After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Words inserted.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 25, to leave out Sub-section (2),—(*Sir R. Webster*) ... ... ... ... ... 1658

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, after line 18, to insert, as a new sub-section, the words—

"(3) The third section of the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution, in Section (3), paragraph (b), of the words 'other than theatres' for the words 'other than premises licensed according to law for public entertainments,'"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" .. 1659

After Debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn* ... ... 1662

Amendment proposed, in page 3, after line 18, to insert, as a new sub-section, the words—

"(3) The third section of the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution, in Section 3, paragraph (c), of the word 'twelve' for 'ten,'"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 274; Noes 80.—(Division List, No. 64) ... ... ... ... 1665

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 26, to leave out from the word "and," to the word "accordingly," inclusive, in line 27, and insert "a licence under that section may be separately granted for the purposes of this enactment, and the powers of an Inspector under that section shall extend to any place at which the training of a child is authorised by any such licence,"—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill" ... ... ... ... ... 1666

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 133; Noes 260.—(Division List, No. 65) ... ... ... ... 1671

Question proposed,

"That the words 'a licence under that section may be separately granted for the purposes of this enactment, and the powers of an Inspector under that section shall extend to any place at which the training of a child is authorised by any such licence' be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out from the word "enactment" to the end of the proposed Amendment,—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

After Debate, Question put, and *negatived* ... ... ... 1674

Words, as amended, *inserted.*

Amendment proposed, after the last Amendment, to insert the words—

"But no licence shall be requisite for the training of any child by its parent or guardian,"—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted:"—The House divided:—Ayes 305; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 66) ... 1675

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 2, to leave out from the word "entertainment" to the second word "the," in line 3,—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 70; Noes 327.—(Division List, No. 67) ... ... ... ... 1678

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL—*continued.*

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 5, after the word "object," to insert the words—

"If such sale or entertainment is held elsewhere than on premises which are licensed for the sale of any intoxicating liquor, but not licensed according to law for public entertainments, or if, in the case of a sale or entertainment held in any such premises as aforesaid, a special exemption from the provisions of the said section has been granted in writing under the hands of two Justices of the Peace,"—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short Debate, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned ... ... ... ... ... ... 1679

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

**Steam Trawlers (Scotland) Bill (No. 200)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Crombie.*)

After short Debate, objection being taken to Further Proceeding, Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next ... ... ... 1680

**Wemyss, &c., Water Provisional Order Bill (No. 158)**—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 9) Bill (No. 238)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 10) Bill (No. 239)**—Read a second time, and committed.

**Public Buildings (London) Bill (No. 243)**—

As amended, considered.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 15, to leave out the words "in the month of September, October, or November,"—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Friday.

## *MOTION.*

—o—

**Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 19) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Bryce*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 262.]

THE

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*Authorised Edition*)

IN THE

*THIRD SESSION* OF THE *TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 12 MARCH 1894, IN THE FIFTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

## HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

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## THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1894.

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## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 1st May 1894.*

The Earl of Selborne—Sat Speaker.

### LAND TRANSFER BILL.—(No. 19.)

### COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): My Lords, before the House resolves itself into Committee, I wish to say I have received, as I daresay some of your Lordships have also, a communication on the subject of the Bill from the Incorporated Law Society with regard to the details of some of its provisions. Of those criticisms some, I imagine, will not be considered of very great importance, but others of them, I think, are deserving of consideration; but they appear to be purely on matters of detail in the Bill. I propose to consider them before the Bill goes to Standing Committee, where I shall put the Amendments I propose to make in the Bill. I do not, therefore, propose to trouble your Lordships with them at this stage.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion agreed to; House in Committee accordingly.

Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

## PISTOLS BILL.—(No. 11.)

### COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

**Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY** said, he had followed the advice of the noble Earl who spoke for the Home Office, and had put down Amendments replacing the age at 18 and the exemptions from gun licences which were in the Home Office amended Bill of last year, and also one to omit the subsection respecting women. With regard to the Amendments put down by the noble Earl, he thought that the Home Office Amendment respecting wholesale dealing was more explicit and preferable to his own. The Home Office had not been satisfied with introducing the ironmongers, many of whom really were gunsmiths, but the Home Office had thoughtfully re-introduced the marine-store dealers, many of whom differed little from receivers of stolen property, so as to ensure the Bill being again blocked by Mr. Hopwood, whose Liverpool experience of this class of shops showed that this was not merely a crotchet. The Home Office Amendments also struck out Clause 10. He did not know why, for a marginal note referred to the Poaching Prevention Act of 1862, which authorised search for guns or nets or other implements; and there was every reason why the police should search for pistols where they had reason to suspect an intention of murder or of suicide. He now came to the Amendment to strike out what he considered the most important provision of the Bill—namely, the permit of the Police Inspector; the only means of restricting the sale of pistols, for the tax of 10s. would not have much effect that way, and the Home Office Bill would only have the effect of slightly increasing the Revenue. Complaints had been made against the Inland Revenue officials, and they had been called supine for not having levied the Gun Tax on those who had pistols. But they were not to blame; the blame must be put upon Magistrates recently appointed by Gladstonian Lords Lieutenant who, in such cases, inflicted very light sentences, often without costs, so that the Inland Revenue officials found it more profitable to let offenders alone than to prosecute. It was not to be expected, therefore, that the Inland Revenue would contribute much towards enforcing this Act. The 10s. licence would still leave the sale open to all those persons who, by reason of their age, position, and occupation, were most unfitted to possess and handle pistols. He would therefore take the sense of the House if the noble Earl (Lord Chesterfield) pressed this Amendment. He now came to the Home Office Amendment to strike out the clause prohibiting the use of toy pistols. The Home Office contention was that the clause was unnecessary, since toy pistols would come under the Act. The answer to that was that so long as pistols as cheap as those existed, and their deadly nature was disguised under the name of toys, so long would boys succeed in obtaining them, and even parents be foolish enough not to refuse such dangerous toys to their children. Therefore, those toy pistols must be extirpated. Since the Second Reading of this Bill he had heard of a town not far from London where there had been an epidemic of pistols amongst the schoolboys. In one case a father had given his son of 15 a pistol. As he was a clergyman, he was probably quite ignorant of the danger of such firearms. The boy lost no time in shooting through a window, making a clear round hole in the glass; his informant was the mother of four children living in this house, and who might have been standing behind this window. On her remonstrating, the incautious father deprived his reckless offspring of this most unsuitable toy. He would read to the House another case from the same town which ended fatally, but did not become public. The air-guns in which the boys use shot cost 4s. 6d. each, but may even be bought for 2s. 6d. For some of the air-guns small darts were used. The account stated—

> "This boy was shot with an old pistol loaded with slugs. It wouldn't go off when they first tried to fire it, and then went off unexpectedly while the two boys were handling it. The wound was on the left side of the head and the boy became partially paralysed, and suffered greatly for nine months. His mother said he cried for whole nights, and was much troubled with neuralgia. He died a year and a fortnight after being shot from abscess on the brain.

He did not become an idiot, but could not always express what he wanted to say. There was no coroner's inquest held, as he lived over a year after the accident."

It might contribute more effectively to the appreciation by their Lordships of the necessity of disregarding the selfish interests of those who traded in such toys and of suppressing them if the question were put to them, With what feelings would they regard any person who should supply such pistols and ammunition to their sons or grandchildren? The indignation they would feel should guide them to their vote on this occasion. He must say he had more hopes of the Prime Minister than of the ex-Prime Minister, for the former had boys of a "pistol age," while the latter's sons were older and devoted to scientific pursuits. He warned the noble Lord who had charge of the revision of the Bill that if he carried against him the clause with regard to Police Inspectors the Bill would become entirely the Home Office Bill without any difference. It would no longer be his Bill to restore, because the noble Earl would have recaptured the Bill and would have to put a prize-crew on board and either carry it into port or abandon it as derelict. That was how the matter stood. He moved that the House resolve itself into Committee.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Lord Stanley of Alderley.*)

*THE EARL OF ARRAN drew attention to the clause permitting the sale of licences for killing game by persons holding licences to sell pistols. It seemed a very remarkable clause, and he gave notice that he should move its rejection on going into Committee.

Motion agreed to; House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 1.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, the Government proposed that Sub-sections 3 to 8 should be struck out, and that after Sub-section 2 to insert—

(3.) A pistol may not be sold to or bought by any person unless he is licensed to sell pistols or produces on the occasion of the sale either—

(*a*) a licence or certificate authorising him either to use or carry a gun or to kill game; or

(*b*) a statement signed by him that he is an officer in the Naval or Military Service of Her Majesty; or

(*c*) a certificate from the Board of Trade, showing that he is a master or mate, or engineer, in the Merchant Service; or

(*d*) a statement signed by him that he is ordered abroad on the Public Service and is about to leave the United Kingdom for that purpose within 14 days from the date of the purchase; or

(*e*) a statement signed by him and attested by a Justice of the Peace that he is about to emigrate within 14 days from the date of the purchase; or

(*f*) in the case of a foreigner, a statement signed by him and endorsed by a consular officer for the country to which he belongs, to the effect that he is about to leave the United Kingdom within 14 days from the date of the purchase."

His noble Friend Lord Stanley proposed that a pistol should not be sold to or bought by any person unless he produced a full game licence or a licence from the Police Inspector of his district, for which a fee of 1s. would be charged authorising him to purchase the pistol. The Government strongly objected to that clause. In the first place, they were unwilling to extend the control of the police over matters outside their sphere as an Executive force; and, secondly, an Inspector of Police would always grant a licence to anyone who asked for it, in which case the provision would be useless, or he would exercise a discretion which the Government did not think a Police Inspector was the right person to exercise. Very few licences were in the hands of the police—sweeps and pedlars seemed to be the only class they dealt with. A third objection to the noble Lord's proposal was that he was making one law for the rich and another for the poor. A man who could afford to take out a game licence would be under no police control at all, whereas the man who could not afford to do so would be under police supervision. A fourth reason was that under the Gun Act, 1870, and even under this Bill, persons might carry pisto for a 10s. licence. The noble Lord proposed to interfere only with the buying. So that a man might go into a shop with another, who had a £3 licence, and might buy a pistol which he could give to his friend, who would then be able to carry it about with a 10s. licence. The Government, therefore, objected to the noble Lord's Clause 3.

**The Earl of CRANBROOK** was bound to say he could see difficulties in the wording of this Bill. In the first place, he doubted whether "pistol" could be so defined as to secure the objects of the Bill at all. They were described as being 15 inches in length. If that were to be laid down, it would be very easy for the trade to make pistols half-an-inch longer and put an end to the Act. With regard to the objection of the Home Office to bringing in the Police Inspector at all, nothing could well be more absurd, for instance, than that a Magistrate who did not take out a game licence should have to go to a Police Inspector. The police should not be introduced into matters with which they had nothing to do. The noble Lord's proposal was rather ambiguous with regard to a licence to carry a gun to kill game. Then with regard to the statement to be made by military or naval men, the shopkeeper was not bound to believe them, and the statement would go no further than that a man was about to emigrate within 14 days. Again, supposing that were true, a pistol would be sold to a man going out to a country where they were forbidden. All these difficulties would arise; but at present the Committee was considering whether Police Inspectors should be called in, and upon that point he entirely agreed with the noble Lord opposite.

**The Marquess of SALISBURY**: I would ask the noble Lord whether this Amendment as he has drawn it is not a little in advance of our present state of civilisation? There is no provision for people who want to defend themselves. It is very hard, of course, but a robber is sure to have a pistol as well as the attacked person, but he does not take out a licence. As a test to the noble Lord I will put to him this question: Will he include in one of his sub-sections a caretaker or bailiff to a landlord in Ireland? If he will consider that lamentable event which we discussed the other day, he will see that the unfortunate caretaker had no pistol. If he had he would no doubt have defended himself against the masked men who put him into a corner and fired shots at him. Persons in that position, it may be said, would have that power upon getting a 10s. licence, but surely it is an oppression upon poor men whose lives are in danger to tell them that if they are not rich enough to pay a 10s. licence they shall be liable to be shot by people who attack them. I am not prepared to move an Amendment, but I submit to the noble Lord that one of his sub-sections ought to include people whose lives are in danger if they have no weapon to defend themselves. If the noble Lord disputes that there is that danger, I refer him to the South and West of Ireland for an illustration.

**The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY and LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (The Earl of Rosebery)**: I do think the Justices might be authorised in such cases to grant licences under the circumstances stated just now by the noble Marquess, but he will perhaps allow the matter to stand over for the present.

***Lord ASHBOURNE** said, that licences were granted in Ireland, and they might often be necessary for protection.

Amendments agreed to.

**The Earl of CHESTERFIELD** said, the Government proposed another Amendment in the clause, Sub-section 4, to substitute the age of 18 for 21. The noble Lord had an Amendment down to the same effect.

Amendment moved, in Sub-section 4, to insert—

("(4.) A pistol, or ammunition suitable only for a pistol, may not be sold to a person apparently under the age of 18 years, or bought by a person under that age").

Amendment agreed to.

**The Earl of CHESTERFIELD** moved to omit Clauses 5 and 6, and to substitute the following:—

"(5.) On every sale of a pistol the seller must enter in a book kept by him the date of the sale, the name and address of the purchaser, and the name, mark, or number identifying the pistol, and must either cause this entry to be signed by the purchaser, or keep for production, if so required, an order signed by the purchaser.

(6.) Every seller of a pistol must retain the book so kept by him for a period of not less than five years from the date of the last entry therein, and must, while he retains the book, produce it for inspection by any officer of police or any officer of Inland Revenue on being so requested."

These alterations were necessary in order to meet the case of orders sent through the post.

Amendments agreed to.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD moved to insert the following sub-section :—

"(7.) This section shall apply only in the case of the sale of a pistol by any person in the course of trade or business."

Motion agreed to.

Amendment moved, in page 2, line 11, after ("age") to insert

("or as to any matter which he is required by this section to state").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Remaining sub-sections agreed to with verbal and consequential Amendments.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD moved, in line 19, after "gunsmith," to insert the words "ironmongers, auctioneers, and marine store dealers." This class of dealers was inserted in the Home Secretary's Bill last Session in consequence of strong recommendations made to him by the respective trades, and they were supported by the consideration that they were respectable bodies of men not likely to abuse the privilege. Ironmongers were, as a matter of fact, in many of our small towns the gunsmiths of the place. There being, in fact, no gunsmiths, ironmongers did the work. Very strong recommendations were made to the Government on the subject.

Amendment moved, in page 2, line 19, after ("gunsmith") to insert ("ironmonger, auctioneer, marine store dealer").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD moved, in line 21, after ("a") to insert ("city or"), and in line 22, to leave out ("borough") and insert after ("council") the words ("of the city or borough"). This, he explained, was to include the City of London.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD said, if the noble Lord would bring up his Amendment upon this clause at a later stage of the Bill he would promise to give it further consideration.

The Earl of ARRAN said, the Bill provided in Clause 3 that—

"The Commissioners of Inland Revenue may, if they think fit, authorise any licensed vendor of pistols to sell licences to use or carry a gun or to kill game, and may pay such poundage in respect of the sale of such licences as may be sanctioned by the Treasury, and shall deduct the poundage so paid from the proceeds of such sales before paying the same into the Local Taxation Account."

He would be very glad to suit the convenience of the noble Lord, but he trusted that in doing so it would be understood that he would still be able to move its omission at a future stage. It was, of course, a most important provision.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 4.

Consequential Amendments.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD said, he moved on behalf of the Government to omit this clause altogether. It prohibited the importation of toy pistols. If a toy pistol was capable of discharging ammunition it would probably come within Clause 14, which provided that—

"For the purposes of this Act every firearm not exceeding 15 inches in length shall be deemed to be a pistol."

It was, of course, subject to all the restrictions of the Act, and he moved to omit the clause.

Moved, "To leave out the Clause."—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Viscount CROSS asked for a definition of the word "ammunition." These toy pistols did a great deal of harm, though they might not be charged with what was called "ammunition."

Lord ASHBOURNE said, they were grasped by the general definition.

The Earl of CHESTERFIELD said, the noble Viscount asked for a definition of "ammunition." He supposed it meant powder and shot.

The **Marquess of SALISBURY** said, powder and shot were not wanted for toy pistols.

**Viscount CROSS** said, they were often discharged by a spring.

**Lord ASHBOURNE** said, the point could be considered in Standing Committee.

**Viscount CROSS** said, that the toy pistols which were produced at the Table the other day by the noble Lord were actuated by a spring, and discharged darts and arrows, which could hardly be called ammunition.

**The Earl of ROSEBERY** said, their Lordships had an instance the other day of what formidable weapons these might become.

Clause struck out.

Clause 6.

***Lord ASHBOURNE** said, he was most friendly to the object of this Bill, and he sincerely hoped it would pass with the Amendments of the noble Earl who represented the Government. But it was obvious that this clause would require a good deal of consideration in Standing Committee. He would not propose an Amendment, but it was obvious that innocent people who were quite meritorious might be subjected under the Bill to considerable persecution and annoyance in many parts of the country —for example, in Ireland. He invited the noble Earl's consideration upon the matter in order that he might set the drafting abilities of the Government to work. A man might be starting on a journey with the entirely legitimate idea of defending himself while travelling through particular districts, and it would be necessary for him to obtain permission from the police in each district he passed through. As the Bill was drafted, the man would require a mass of permits and would also have to find out who was the chief police officer of each district, involving upon him great inconvenience. Speaking for the part of Her Majesty's Dominions which he knew best, innocent persons might not be able while travelling to obtain a written permit from the chief police officer for the district. He would suggest to the noble Earl that the law in Ireland might be applied for Magistrates to have the power of giving permission to carry pistols or revolvers, so that people need not be put to the trouble of finding out the chief police officers in the districts they passed through. The form of drafting might expose people who had no evil intentions to much convenience. At present, under the drafting, even a General or a Colonel might not escape the risk of fine or imprisonment under this clause, and even the Prime Minister, the Lord Chancellor, or a Privy Councillor, might possibly not get off, and might be taken in charge if he were to cross a thoroughfare with a pistol in his possession.

**The Earl of ROSEBERY** : I never did.

***Lord ASHBOURNE** said, one could not tell what the Prime Minister might take to, as time went on and life advanced; but it would be a very awkward thing that even the Prime Minister would not be safe under this drafting. Of course, nobody would carry a loaded pistol merely for pleasure, and if the weapon were carried for an innocent purpose of protection, it was ridiculous that people should be subjected to a liability of a £5 fine or imprisonment not exceeding one month.

**The Earl of ROSEBERY** : I should have thought that the case of Ireland was dealt with under the Arms Act. I should be grateful if the noble Lord would sketch out the sort of itinerary he had in view where persons might want to travel over the islands adjacent to Great Britain with loaded pistols in their pockets. The noble Lord must surely have been thinking of another sort of pocket pistol.

**Lord ASHBOURNE** said, those were more usual in Scotland.

**The Earl of CHESTERFIELD** moved an Amendment providing that the section should not apply

> "to any person in charge of Her Majesty's mails and authorised by the Postmaster General to carry a pistol."

This was necessary for the protection of the guards of night mails, who carried valuable parcels between such places as London and Brighton, Liverpool and Manchester, and the various towns in England.

Amendment moved, in line 14, after ("practice") to insert ("or to any person in charge of Her Majesty's mails and authorised by the Postmaster General to carry a pistol").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: If it is necessary for the guards, surely it is necessary for innocent passengers. I do not know what the

"dangerous parts of the adjacent islands of Great Britain"

are, where mail guards might require protection; but if they do the passengers are put at a disadvantage in respect to them. It would be very inconvenient if a person travelling in distant parts of Wales or Scotland, finding the Government had given him this protection, had to get out of his conveyance at every 20 miles to get a new permit.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I think this provision is meant to apply to guards of parcel vans, not of mails.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: But mails go by train, not by parcel vans.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I quite sympathise with the views of noble Lords opposite with regard to the comfort of *bonâ fide* travellers, but I do not entirely take the apprehension of their point of view. I feel much more apprehension for the safety of the companion of the *bonâ fide* traveller who carries a loaded pistol than for that of the traveller himself. I knew a case where a man of very exalted position used to carry a loaded revolver, and would produce it and place it on the dinner-table to the serious discomfort and disquietude of his colleagues.

THE EARL OF CRANBROOK said, if a man travelling carried a pistol he would require a licence in every district from the Chief Constable, but in the case of the Post Office guards the licence to the mail guard would carry him over all the highways he had to pass along. Surely it would be necessary to give him a licence which would carry him to the end of his journey.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): I quite agree that the clause requires some amendment, but I do not think it should be frittered away. There may be cases, though they are very exceptional indeed, in which it might be desirable that people should be permitted to have a loaded revolver in a public place, in London for instance, and there should be a simple means of obtaining permission in such cases; and also if a person carrying a pistol without a licence can show that there are circumstances which render his doing so reasonable and proper he should then be excused. Subject to safeguards, I think the Bill valuable for this clause alone, if there were nothing else in the Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: With regard to what the noble Earl opposite has said, I hope it will be enacted that in all public places the Chief Secretary of Ireland may always carry a pistol.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 13, after ("practice") to insert

("or any person in charge of Her Majesty's mails or authorised by Her Majesty's Postmaster General to carry a pistol").

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, the next Amendment was to make the period five years from date of release. Those words were in the original Bill of the Government last Session. This limitation was desirable, as it seemed an extreme step to inflict a life-long disability on a man in addition to the punishment for his offence.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 18, after ("pistol") to insert

("for a period of five years from the date of his release").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, this was a saving clause for wholesale traders and with regard to the sale of antique pistols. The first of the two Amendments he proposed was necessary in order to protect wholesale dealers in selling pistols. Large importations of pistols were made from Germany, and pistols were often sold retail as samples by wholesale dealers. The insertion of these words was proposed in order to meet those cases.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 27, to leave out

("for exportation or in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing; nor") and insert ("(*a*) for exportation, or (*b*) in the ordinary course of wholesale dealing with persons licensed under this Act to sell pistols").

Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, the next Amendment was rather important. It was to enable private individuals to get rid in a lawful way of pistols they might possess; otherwise a person so desirous would have to become a pawnbroker, gunsmith, or marine store dealer.

Amendment moved, to insert the following sub-section:—

("(2) The sale of a pistol by its owner to a person licensed under this Act to sell pistols").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

THE EARL OF CRANBROOK said, this was only to apply to cases in the ordinary course of trade or business. It appeared that a person who had a pistol to sell would be able to sell it to his neighbour without coming for any licence at all. The Bill confined such cases to the "ordinary course of trade or business"; but if a man wanted to get rid of a pistol, under the second sub-section, as proposed to be amended by the Government, a person who had a pistol to sell might, if he chose, either present or sell it to his neighbour without having a licence at all.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, an Amendment of this clause for the recovery of penalties was necessary, as other punishments for the offence were provided, for instance, in Clauses 6 and 7. It was therefore necessary to provide a summary process.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 35, at the end of the Clause to insert—

("And any other punishment imposed under this Act may be imposed on summary conviction").—(*The Earl of Chesterfield.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD moved the omission of this clause. It had been really fitted into the Bill last year, giving power to the police to search suspected persons. The clause ran—

"Any officer of police may search any person whom he has good cause to suspect of carrying a pistol in contravention of this Act, and may seize and detain any pistol found on any such person."

The clause met with strenuous opposition on the ground that it was an undue extension of the inquisitorial powers of the police.

Moved, To leave out the clause.

Motion agreed to.

Clause 11.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked the noble Earl to explain how there came to be imposed a penalty of £100 upon the importer of a single pistol when not part of a wholesale consignment? Why should a returned colonist or a Civil servant coming home from India and not familiar with the state of the law be exposed to a fine of £100?

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, he really did not know. This was the noble Lord's own Bill, and he was best able to answer his own question. Why did the noble Lord put it in if he did not like it? He would move to omit the clause altogether. It met with strenuous opposition last year, and would be of very doubtful effect. When a pistol was once imported, the traffic in it would be subject to all the provisions of this Bill, and nobody would be entitled to possess a foreign pistol any more than one made in this country.

Moved, To leave out the clause.

Motion agreed to.

Clause 12.

Consequential Amendments.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD said, he had an Amendment on this clause which was necessary for the proper application to the Act of Scotland.

Amendment moved,

In line 20, to insert at the end of the Clause ("'borough' shall mean a royal, parliamentary, or police burgh, and 'borough council' the provost and magistrates").

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Title.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY suggested that the Bill should be entitled, "a Bill for increasing the Inland Revenue from the sale of pistols." With the Amendments which had been made upon it, the Bill was now entirely Mr. Asquith's Bill, having been replaced exactly as it was before, and he disclaimed all responsibility for it. He did not wish to be responsible for the children who might be killed next year with the weapons which had not been dealt with.

Title agreed to.

Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed, as amended. (No. 40.)

### SOLICITORS' EXAMINATION BILL.

### SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD MACNAGHTEN said, in moving the Second Reading, that the Bill had been promoted by the Incorporated Law Society. Its object was to enable that Society to exempt from one of their examinations, either in whole or part, persons who had obtained law degrees at one of the Universities of the United Kingdom. The Bill had passed the other House.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Macnaghten.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): The only observation I have to make upon the Bill is that it limits the power of the Incorporated Law Society to except persons from examination to cases where a University examination had been passed before entering into articles or into partnership.

LORD MACNAGHTEN said, an Amendment would be proposed upon that point in Committee.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that was the only comment he wished to make.

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday next.

### SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROCEDURE) BILL [H.L.]—(No. 26.)

Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments: The Report of the Amendment made in Committee of the Whole House and of the Amendments made by the Standing Committee to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 37.)

### TRUSTEE ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 20.)

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 38.)

### LIMITATION OF ACTIONS [H.L.].—(No. 13.)

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Friday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 39.)

### COLONIAL OFFICERS (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 25.)

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3ª on Friday next.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) BILL.

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

### GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 1) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bolsover Gas, Earby and Thornton Gas, Ilford Gas, and Willenhall Gas—Was presented by the Lord Playfair; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 41.)

### GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 2) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Newquay (Cornwall) Gas, North Bierley Gas, Uttoxeter Gas, and Worthing Gas—Was presented by the Lord Playfair; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 42.)

### TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 1) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Barrow-in-Furness-

Corporation Tramways, Liverpool and Walton-on-the-Hill Tramways, and Liverpool Corporation Tramways (Extensions)—was presented by the Lord Playfair; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 43.)

### WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Water-Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Bishop's Waltham Water, Blandford Water, East Surrey Water, Tilehurst, Pangbourne, and District Water, and West Cheshire Water—was presented by the Lord Playfair; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 44.)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 4) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 45.)

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 46.)

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, to Friday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 1st May 1894.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

### NAVAL CONTRACTS TO PRIVATE YARDS.

**Mr. C. M'LAREN** (Leicester, Bosworth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the number and classes of ships which since November last have been given by the Admiralty to be built by private contractors, specifying the number and total tonnage given to yards on the Clyde, the Mersey, and Barrow-in-Furness on the one hand, and yards on the Tyne, the Wear, the Humber, and the Thames on the other; and whether any of the firms on the west coast to whom contracts have been given have had no previous experience in building the class of vessel now undertaken by them?

**Mr. CLARENCE SMITH** (Hull, E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question may I ask him, in the interests of my constituents, for an assurance that the failure of Hull to obtain a contract was merely due to the question of price, and was no reflection on the quality of the former work done at Hull. I should also like to ask if he is aware that at the present time work is more plentiful on the west coast where all these orders have been placed than on the east coast?

**The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY** (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): I regret very much that Hull should have been unsuccessful in tendering for these orders. It is simply a question of cost. The ships built at Hull have given great satisfaction. In answer to the question on the Paper, I have to say the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's question could not be dealt with within the limits of an answer. If hon. Members desire a Return of the vessels recently put out to contract, and the locality of the firms who have obtained the contracts, there will be no objection. The firms on the west coast, with whom contracts have been placed for battleships and cruisers, have all had previous experience of building such ships.

**Mr. C. M'LAREN**: Can the right hon. Baronet give, in the form of an answer to a question, the amount of tonnage placed on the west coast compared with that for the east coast?

**Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: With respect to the battleships and cruisers the whole of the orders have gone to the west coast, the tenderers on the east coast having been singularly unsuccessful.

### PAROCHIAL REGISTER OF ELECTORS IN LEICESTERSHIRE.

**Mr. C. M'LAREN**: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received any representations from the Leicestershire County Council as to the date on which the Parochial Register of Electors should come into operation; and whether he proposes to make the date the 1st of January, 1895, as in the case of the Parliamentary and Local Government Registers, or to adhere to the 22nd of November as originally fixed?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I have received the representation referred to from the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Leicestershire County Council, as they think the date on which the Parochial Register would come into effect may be deferred till January 1. I have received no other representation on the subject, and I do not propose to make any change in the Bill.

## POST OFFICE STATIONARY CLERKS.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he can explain the cause of the delay in putting in force in Ireland and Scotland the new Regulations sanctioned by the Treasury on the 19th of August last, and put in force in England and Wales about two months ago, affecting the stationary clerks in the Post Office Surveyors' Departments in the United Kingdom?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): In connection with these officers, questions have arisen in Scotland and in Ireland which did not arise in England. These questions are now on the point of settlement, and I hope to be able to announce my decision shortly.

## THE IRISH EDUCATION ACT, 1892.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he will introduce the Bill to amend "The Irish Education Act, 1892," which on the 10th and 17th of March he promised to introduce upon dates which have already elapsed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Bill is now before me. A question has arisen as to some of its provisions, but I do not think many days will elapse before I come to a decision on the subject. I will not delay it longer than possible.

Mr. FIELD: Does the right hon. Gentleman say definitely that he will introduce a Bill?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Certainly, Sir.

## ARMY RESERVISTS AS POSTMEN.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General how many postmen were appointed in the quarter ending the 31st of March, 1894, and what proportion of them were Army Reservists?

Mr. A. MORLEY: In the United Kingdom during the first quarter of this year 491 postmen were appointed. This number was below the average of the previous two years. Of the 491 postmen, 59 were Army Reservists, or as nearly as possible 12 per cent.

Major RASCH: Would the right hon. Gentleman mind saying why the recommendation introduced by the late Postmaster General has not been more fully carried out?

Mr. A. MORLEY: The recommendation has been entirely carried out. With one or two exceptions, preference has been given to Army men.

## ILLEGAL DENUNCIATION IN IRELAND.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the serious increase in Ireland of the practice of denouncing individuals and small classes of persons and threatening them with ruin or persecution in case they refuse to abandon their lawful occupations; and whether, in view of the great danger to life and liberty attending this practice, he will take all possible steps to punish persons who are guilty of it?

*Mr. J. MORLEY: There are no grounds whatever for the assumption in the question of the hon. Gentleman that there has been an increase in the practices referred to. On the contrary, the information in my possession, and which has been supplied by the highest Police Authorities, shows that there has been a decline in these denunciations generally. Regarding the second paragraph of the question, it is hardly necessary to point out that the police are fully sensible of their responsibilities and duties, and that every necessary protection is afforded to all classes of persons in the exercise of their legal rights.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the fact that last month nine meetings were held at which persons were denounced by name—in Kilkenny, Limerick, Roscommon, and Cork; and does he know that at a meeting held for the purpose of condemning the recent murder at Cork there was a further denunciation of people taking evicted farms?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I cannot answer for every particular; but, broadly speaking, there is no doubt whatever that since the Quarterly Returns were instituted in February, 1892, the present quarter shows a most marked decline in these offences.

**Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: Might I ask whether, in any of the nine cases I have referred to, any person has been made amenable to the law?

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) (persistently and loudly): Notice, notice, notice.

**Mr. W. JOHNSTON** (Belfast, S.): I rise to Order, Sir. I beg to call attention to the disorderly interruption of the hon. Member for North Louth.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I have not those nine cases in my mind, and so I cannot say. But it does not follow that it would be to the interest of the people concerned to resort to legal proceedings. I rely on the broad fact that these practices are not increasing, but declining.

**Mr. MACARTNEY** (Antrim, S.): Among the Returns sent to the right hon. Gentleman, is there any case of a parish priest who uttered one of these denunciations from the altar of the chapel?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I am not aware of such a case. If the hon. Member will put the question on the Paper I will inquire.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: May I ask, as a point of Order, whether an hon. Member can reasonably be allowed to insinuate in a question that a parish priest has incited to assassination from the altar?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member is no doubt responsible for what he is saying; but it would have been better if the question had been put on the Paper, and it would have been more convenient for the Minister who has to answer.

**Mr. MACARTNEY**: I intend, Sir, to put a definite question as to a particular case, but I wish to say I have never made any insinuation. I asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had seen among the reports any such case of denunciation.

## COUNTY RATE COLLECTION AT ULLAPOOL.

**Mr. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that a Sheriff's officer is actively engaged in and around Ullapool poinding the effects of the crofters and fishermen for the county rate; if so, will he state why these persons have not been summoned in the ordinary course?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The proceedings for the recovery of the consolidated rates due by certain ratepayers in the parish of Lochbroom, in which Ullapool is situated, were, as in the ordinary course, by way of summary warrant under Section 62 (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889. These rates are those imposed in October last for the year from the 15th of May, 1893, to the 15th of May, 1894, and arrears for previous years. The rates for the year 1893-94 became payable on the 24th of November last, and notices requiring payment were in the hands of the defaulting ratepayers before that day. Further, before the summary warrants were put in force, the county collector issued a printed notice to defaulters warning them that if the rates were not paid a Sheriff officer would be instructed to take steps to enforce payment; and it was only on failure to comply with this warning that their effects were distrained under the warrants. I am informed by the county clerk that the rates should have been paid at the end of last harvest, and that, in these circumstances, it is not proposed to allow any further delay unless in very exceptional cases where the county collector considers it advisable to do so.

## FISHERY DISPUTES IN THE MORAY FIRTH.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is now in a position to furnish further information with regard to the attack made by a number of water bailiffs upon fishermen in the Moray Firth, off Jemimaville, on the 3rd instant; if he will state why the Procurator Fiscal failed to take action against the water bailiffs for assault, attempt to board the fishermen's boats, and firing several shots at the fishermen; why no action has been taken against the water bailiff who aimed a loaded gun at one of the fishermen, and was only prevented firing it by one of his companions taking the gun from him; and whether it is proposed to take action against the water bailiffs?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.): As I stated, in answer to a previous question, the fishermen have been committed for trial for assault. A formal charge has now been lodged accusing the bailiffs of discharging loaded firearms, and this charge is being investigated.

### MR. M'ELLIGOTT, J.P.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Gerald M'Elligott held, up to the time of his appointment as Magistrate, the spirit licence attached to the hotel at Listowel, County Kerry; whether the licence has been transferred; and, if so, how often; and who is the holder of the licence at the present time?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Mr. M'Elligott appears to have been appointed a Magistrate on the recommendation of Lord Kenmare about 10 years ago. He had held a spirit licence attached to a hotel at Listowel, and prior to the appointment the premises and licence were transferred to his son, who thenceforward managed the business till 1888, when he left the country. After two transfers to other persons, the hotel and licence were this year transferred to Mr. M'Elligott's wife, and the transfer to her was confirmed at Quarter Sessions. I am informed that Mr. M'Elligott resides in a private house outside Listowel, taking no part in Licensing Sessions business, and has discharged all the other duties of a Magistrate in a manner thoroughly satisfactory; and the Lord Chancellor sees no reason for going back on what has been done by his predecessor in office.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain how it is that the name does not appear in the Return just issued?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I cannot say.

### MR. BUTTERLY, J.P.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has taken any steps in the case of Mr. Butterly, J.P.?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor has been in communication with Mr. Butterly on the subject of the resolution, to which this and previous questions by the same hon. Member have reference. Mr. Butterly has informed the Lord Chancellor that he had no previous knowledge of the intention to move the resolution, and that had he realised at the time the impropriety of his action, he would not have countenanced the resolution. He has expressed his regret for his conduct, and under these circumstances the Lord Chancellor, while gravely admonishing the gentleman, has not thought it necessary to take further action.

### WEIGHBRIDGES IN IRELAND.

Mr. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a firm of weighbridge makers exhibited at the Royal Dublin Society's show, at Ball's Bridge, last week, a cattle weighbridge, fitted with a dial and automatic indicator, with a view to its adoption by Fair and Market Authorities throughout Ireland; is he aware that the smallest division represents 14lbs., and that the machine, therefore, is unsuited for the weighing of pigs and sheep; also that there is no balance ball attached to the dial apparatus having a screw with revolving ball, enabling the weigh-table to be readily and easily cleansed and balanced, so that the droppings of animals weighed may not be weighed in with the succeeding animal; is he aware that the Inspectors of Weights and Measures cannot apply the test for sensitiveness to these dials—namely, No. 55 of the Model Regulations, 1890, and that the water in the cistern that regulates the back weight within the cistern varies in weight through change of temperature, and that no sworn weigher will certify the weight from a dial machine; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter?

Mr. J. MORLEY: My attention had not previously been drawn to the exhibition of the weighbridge referred to. I have directed the attention of the Land Commission to the matter.

### COMPASSIONATE CAMPAIGN PENSIONS.

Captain BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any money is now available for Special Compassionate

Campaign Pensions for services prior to 1860; and, if not, whether he intends to take any steps to continue the issue of such pensions?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: One hundred special pensions begin in this financial year, and these have already been allotted. About 50 vacancies are expected during the year among the pensioners, for whom £10,000 a year was specially granted. These vacancies will be filled as they arise.

## FACTORY OFFICES.

SIR A. HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department why it is considered necessary to establish factory offices in the towns of Norwich, Southampton, Plymouth, &c., and not in the much more important manufacturing town of Wolverhampton; whether he is aware that the Factory Inspector's business in the three towns first-named is less than one-tenth of that in Wolverhampton; whether he is aware that the public make extremely little use of these offices; and will he consider whether the granting of an allowance for clerical assistance would give much more effectual help to the Factory Inspectors in the performance of their duties?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): It was considered that the Factory Office in Birmingham was sufficient to include the Wolverhampton district. Norwich, Southampton, and Plymouth are all centres of districts. I do not think that the hon. Member need be under any apprehension that so important a place as Wolverhampton will be overlooked. The purpose of local offices is quite distinct from that of clerical assistance. How far the system of providing them will be extended is a matter which will be decided after further experience, but I hope that the establishment of these offices will remove any difficulty from which the public have suffered from not knowing where the Inspector was to be found. A considerable addition has already been made to the staff, and it is not proposed that there should be any further additions for the present.

## THE LIVERPOOL CITY RECORDER.

MR. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, at the present sitting of the Liverpool City Sessions, during the trial of a female prisoner, the Recorder interrupted the deliberations of the jury by remarking that it did not matter whether they said "guilty or not guilty," as it was the prisoner's first offence he should sentence her to one day's imprisonment; and that thereupon the jury found a verdict of guilty; and whether he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter?

MR. ASQUITH: I have been in communication with the Recorder with reference to the statement made by my hon. Friend, and am informed that the case referred to was a slight offence, and that the prisoner was defended by counsel. The jury had been deliberating some time, and appeared to be almost unanimous, one of their number apparently standing out. They were asked to make up their minds, as it did not matter whether they said "guilty" or "not guilty." They shortly after found her "guilty." The Recorder then, and not till then, explained to the jury that it was the prisoner's first offence, that she had already suffered a month's imprisonment, and he sentenced her to one day's imprisonment. The Recorder adds that he regretted having made the remark as soon as he had made it, but he is certain that no injustice was done.

## DROMOD DISPENSARY DISTRICT.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the fact that Dr. Pentland is evading their order to reside in his dispensary district at Dromod, South Leitrim; whether he is aware that Dr. Pentland was absent on Sunday morning last when sought by John Farrell, of Cloontumpher, to attend his wife, who was dangerously ill, and was absent on Saturday, the 13th of April, when called to attend the case of Patrick Cawan Clonmorris; and whether he will order a sworn inquiry into this officer's persistent neglect of his duty?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: In November last the Local Government Board were informed by Dr. Pentland that he had a residence within his district. The Board now learn that the facts are as stated in the second paragraph, and if, as the result of further inquiry which the Board are making, it is found that the gentleman referred to is not living within his district they will require him to take up his residence there under pain of removal from office.

### BRIGHTON CAVALRY BARRACKS.

**MR. LODER** (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has any objection to stating the cause for the delay in replacing the Inniskillen Dragoons at the Cavalry Barracks, Brighton; and whether it has yet been decided when another regiment will be sent there?

**MR. WOODALL** (who replied) said: At present there is no cavalry regiment available for stationing at Brighton. It cannot yet be stated when a regiment will be available.

### THE "QUEEN *V.* LINTON."

**MR. KILBRIDE** (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the Petty Sessions held in Athy, on the 20th February, in the case of the "Queen *v.* Samuel Linton," who was charged with carrying a revolver without a licence in the County Kildare, Head Constable Burke stated he could not proceed without instructions from the authorities; whether such instructions have been given, and with what result; and is Samuel Linton the same person who in December last was sentenced to a month's imprisonment for being found drunk with a fully loaded revolver in his possession?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The facts are these. In December last Linton was sentenced to a month's imprisonment on the charge of being drunk while in possession of a loaded revolver, and the hearing of a second charge of having a revolver without a licence under the Peace Preservation Act was deferred. On the 30th of January, Linton was prosecuted at the instance of the Excise Authorities under the Gun Licence Act, and a fine of £2 10s. was imposed. At Petty Sessions, on the 20th of February, the Head Constable said he was awaiting instructions relative to the prosecution on the charge of having a revolver without a licence under the Peace Preservation Act, and the facts having been brought to the notice of the Government it has since been decided that the case had been sufficiently met by the punishments already inflicted and the forfeiture of the man's revolver. Accordingly, the prosecution under the Peace Preservation Act will not be further proceeded with.

### THE LUGGACURREN ESTATE.

**MR. KILBRIDE**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number and annual cost of extra police in Queen's County in connection with the Luggacurren Estate; what has been the total expenditure on extra police in connection with this estate since November, 1886; and what is the amount of rent paid for the temporary barracks at Luggacurren and Coolglass?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The Inspector General informs me that any extra duties in connection with protection on the Luggacurren estate have been performed by men of the ordinary free force of the county. The number of men so employed has varied from five to 27, and the total cost to March 31 last (assuming the men performed no other duty) amounts to £4,125. The cost incurred by the employment of detachments on occasions of evictions on the estate amounts to £680. The rent paid for the temporary barracks at Luggacurren and Coolglass amounts at the present date to £99.

**MR. SEXTON** (Kerry, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman now inform the House when he will lay on the Table a Return of the cost to the Imperial executive of proceedings since 1879 on the estates referred to in the Report of the Mathew Commission?

**MR. J. MORLEY**; The Return will be laid as soon as possible.

**MR. BODKIN** (Roscommon, S.): Am I to understand £99 is the annual rental for the temporary barracks?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: No; I am told it is the amount paid up to the present date. I should say it was the gross total.

## FISHERY IMPROVEMENTS IN SOUTH KERRY.

Mr. KILBRIDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have decided to carry out the recommendations made to them by certain members of the Board for the construction of a pier, and another at Sneem, also boat-slips on the north side of Valentia, and at Castle Cove, and whether it is a fact that on the coast of South Kerry, from Rosbeigh to Culcross Point, a distance of more than 100 miles, no works have been undertaken?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I beg to point out to my hon. Friend that the recommendations made to the Congested Districts Board by its members are regarded as confidential. The construction of a pier at Sneem has been deferred pending an application to the Grand Jury for a presentment for an approach road to the site of the proposed pier. The Board have favourably considered the construction of a boat-slip on Valentia Island, but have not yet decided as to the precise site for the work. The Board have provisionally approved of six undertakings along the coast between the points mentioned in the concluding paragraph of the question, and of these one work (a boat-slip and breakwater at Coonanna) is now in course of construction.

## MORTALITY IN ENGLISH PRISONS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state what was the average rate of mortality per 1,000 in Indian gaols on the mainland last year or in 1892; what was the highest and what was the lowest mortality per 1,000 in any such gaol; and what is the rate of mortality in the convict establishments on the Andaman Islands?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The average rate per 1,000 in 1892 was 35·94. The highest mortality occurred at Kindat in Burma, where the rate was 250 per 1,000, but the average strength of the gaol population was only 20, and of the five deaths four were due to a short but severe outbreak of cholera which attacked the town and finally spread to the gaol. The lowest rate was 3·75 per 1,000 at Cuddalore, in the Madras Presidency. The rate on the Andaman Islands was 48·24. This high rate was attributable mainly to an attack of epidemic influenza aggravated by exposure, caused by a disastrous cyclone which destroyed many of the barracks.

## THE CANADIAN CATTLE TRADE.

Mr. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the specific examination of Canadian cattle, announced by him on the 23rd of April, has yet commenced; when the examination or examinations will be made, and by whom they will be undertaken; and whether, in the event of any cases being reported as suspicious, he will cause the information to be published?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I propose that the special examination of the lungs of Canadian cattle should be commenced on the 16th instant, by which date the trade will have been resumed to an extent sufficient for the purpose. The lungs will be examined in the first instance by Veterinary Inspectors stationed at the ports, who will inspect them as soon as practicable after the slaughter of the animals. Any suspicious cases will be forwarded for examination by the veterinary officers of my Department in London, whose Reports will be submitted to me for my personal decision as to the course to be pursued. I shall be quite willing to give the same full publicity to any further circumstances which may occur in connection with this difficult subject as I have done in the past.

Mr. FIELD: Has any friction occurred between the Veterinary Authorities on this subject?

Mr. H. GARDNER: I am not aware of any.

Mr. FIELD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when he will be able to give the result of the examination?

Mr. H. GARDNER: That depends on the number of cattle coming from Canada; probably towards the end of June.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Do I understand that if any suspicious case is reported to the Board of Agriculture that information will be made public?

MR. H. GARDNER: I shall follow absolutely the precedent of last year?

MR. CHAPLIN: What was that precedent?

MR. H. GARDNER: The right hon. Gentleman knows it perfectly well.

MR. CHAPLIN: I forget.

MR. H. GARDNER: I shall follow the precedent that has always been adopted by the Board of Agriculture, both in the right hon. Gentleman's time and in mine.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I think those who have not the official or ex-official knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman are entitled to ask what those precedents are.

MR. H. GARDNER: There is absolutely no concealment on the part of the Board of Agriculture in relation to these matters, but the right hon. Gentleman asks me to give specific information whenever lungs are sent up to the Board for examination, which I could scarcely promise to do.

MR. CHAPLIN: When the right hon. Gentleman says he will adopt the precedents set by the last Government, I wish to ask him whether there were any cases of imported diseased cattle under the late Government, and, therefore, whether there was any possibility of a precedent having been set in the matter?

MR. H. GARDNER: Yes, Sir; there were such cases in the time of the last Government.

MR. CHAPLIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to say when those cases occurred? If it is not convenient for the right hon. Gentleman to answer the question now I will put it upon the Paper.

[No answer was given.]

## SECOND DIVISION CIVIL SERVICE CLERKS.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): On behalf of the hon. Member for Peterborough, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will give assistant clerks in the Civil Service an opportunity of proving their qualifications for clerkships of the Second Division, and thus extend the principle recommended by the Ridley Commission of giving every clerk an opportunity of rising in the Service?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): I beg to refer my hon. Friend to the answer which I gave to a similar question put by the hon. Member for Bow on the 19th of April, and to which I have only to add that assistant clerks, formerly copyists, have always had the same opportunity as other persons of competing for the Second Division, with the additional advantage of the usual extension of age allowed to persons who have served in Public Departments.

## INACCURATE DEATH CERTIFICATES.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he has received information that a man named William Wood Warner, who died of malignant small-pox, in the Birmingham City Hospital, on the 8th of April, 1893, and whom the medical officer of that hospital certified to be not vaccinated, had been vaccinated in the presence of his brothers and sisters now living; whether similar inaccuracies have been complained of to his Department in reference to other cases of deaths from small-pox in the same hospital; and whether he will have public inquiry made into these allegations, so as to ensure correctness in the corresponding entries in the Records of the Registrar General?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): Such information was forwarded to the Local Government Board on April 20 by a Guardian of the King's Norton Union. But, on the other hand, the Board learn from the late chief assistant medical officer of the hospital that William Warner on admission to the hospital had no small-pox eruption which could have masked the most trivial vaccination mark, and that he presented no mark which in the least resembled a vaccination scar. The patient himself stated that he believed he had been vaccinated, but he was certain that no marks resulted from vaccination. As the result of much careful inquiry it was decided that the case should be entered as not vaccinated. This statement is fully confirmed by the late medical superintendent of the hospital, who adds that every possible precaution was taken to ensure correct entry of the facts. As my hon. Friend is aware, submission to the operation of vaccination does not necessarily imply successful vaccination. Beyond a few general statements of the same Guardian, the Board have no information as to such complaints as those referred to in the second part of the question. The Board see no reason for holding any inquiry into the matter.

### THE EX-CHIEF CONSTABLE OF WARWICKSHIRE.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that on the 16th of April the Warwickshire Standing Joint Committee, by the second or casting vote of the Chairman, resolved that an Order of July last cancelling the pension of Mr. Kinchant, the late Chief Constable, be rescinded and the arrears paid, on the ground that an opinion of counsel had raised a doubt as to the validity of a previous Order of the Committee; whether his attention had been drawn to the fact that a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Kinchant was issued in May, 1892, in relation to his bankruptcy, and that he has since been living abroad to escape its execution; whether he is aware that the Committee called upon him to submit himself to a second medical examination, but that he failed to do so, and thereupon, in July last, they cancelled his pension, and in October last dismissed him from the Force; that an application was subsequently made in the Queen's Bench Division, on Mr. Kinchant's behalf, for a mandamus to compel the Committee to pay the pension, and the Lord Chief Justice, in refusing it, said that the Committee were right and had acted within their jurisdiction in cancelling it; that a Petition of Appeal was presented to the April Quarter Sessions, and a date in May next fixed for its hearing, but that, without waiting for this, and as an amendment to a motion to instruct counsel to appear upon the appeal, the Committee have resolved to rescind the Order which the Lord Chief Justice upheld, and to pay the arrears of the pension; whether he is aware that this decision has caused great surprise and indignation throughout the county; and whether he will inquire into the circumstances and remind the Committee of his previous suggestion, in April, 1893, that they should abstain from paying the pension until ordered to do so by a Court of Law, and further suggest that, their action having been approved by the Lord Chief Justice, they should oppose the appeal?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, I am aware of the facts stated by my hon. Friend. A warrant of arrest was issued. I am informed by the Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee that they were satisfied that when Mr. Kinchant was called upon to submit himself to second examination he was at the time suffering from a state of nervous instability which rendered it dangerous to his health to attend, and, taking into consideration that he had earned his pension, they agreed that it should be paid him. By law his pension is not payable to his creditors. The matter is engaging my serious attention.

### GOVERNMENT BILLS IN THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

SIR G. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can take steps to have the Bill for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of England in Wales and Monmouthshire translated into and circulated in the Welsh language?

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir. If this is to be done it must be by private enterprise.

### FRENCH TREATIES WITH NEWFOUNDLAND.

SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Her Majesty's Government will lay before Parliament the Report of the Joint Select Committee of both Houses of the Newfoundland Legislature on the French Treaties Question, dated the 8th of March last, and adopted by the House of Assembly on the 10th of March, and published in Newfoundland?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The right hon. Gentleman will find the Report of the 8th of March, 1893, to which he doubtless refers, at pages 83–90 of the Papers presented in August last [C. 7129.]

### SALARIES OF THE LAW OFFICERS OF THE CROWN.

**MR. POWELL WILLIAMS** (Birmingham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when he will lay upon the Table of the House the Return relating to the salaries, &c. of the Law Officers of the Crown, ordered on the 13th instant?

**SIR J. T. HIBBERT**: For England the information is already complete, except that one Department has not yet sent in its Return, which, however, is hourly expected. I have telegraphed to Edinburgh and Dublin, with the object of expediting the Returns for Scotland and Ireland respectively.

### NEWRY POST OFFICE.

**MR. CARVILL** (Newry): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he has received communications from the Town Commissioners of Newry, and from the Chamber of Commerce as well as from the Trades Council of that borough, protesting against the proposed alterations in the Newry Post Office as unsuitable and utterly inadequate; and if, under the circumstances, he will further consider whether the intended alterations cannot be carried out in a manner more consistent with the universal feeling of the town; and will he state the amount of the proposed outlay, and what additional sum would be required if he were to adopt the suggestions submitted to him by the Local Bodies?

**MR. A. MORLEY**: Communications have been received from the Local Bodies mentioned asking that the contemplated alterations in the Post Office at Newry may be extended by lowering the floor of the public office so as to admit of the removal of the four steps which now lead up from the street level. This alteration, which would involve a special expenditure of at least £220, besides interfering with the basement, and also with the Postmaster's residence to some extent, is not considered to be necessary, and I am not prepared to recommend the Lords of the Treasury to sanction the expense.

### THE OAKINGTON OVERSEERS.

**MR. HUGH HOARE** (Cambridge, Chesterton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will authorise the Justices, sitting in Cambridge, who appointed the wrong men as the two Overseers for the village of Oakington, in Cambridgeshire, owing to a misrepresentation having been made to them as to the choice of the villagers, to rescind the two appointments, and to appoint instead Mr. William Doggett and Mr. William Harradine, who were chosen by the people, and would, but for misrepresentation, have been appointed by the Justices; whether he is aware that the said misrepresentation was made by the outgoing Overseers, whose administration of an important Oakington charity is seriously impugned and is now being considered by the Charity Commissioners; and whether he is aware that such misrepresentation procured their own appointment as Overseers, and foiled the wishes of the parishioners?

**MR. ASQUITH**: I have no jurisdiction in the matter. In certain cases the Courts can entertain an appeal from the parishioners, or quash an appointment on *certiorari*, though in this case I fear it is doubtful whether such a course would be practicable. The Justices appoint persons who are fitting, and are not bound to follow the recommendation of the Vestry. They intended to do so on the present occasion, but were apparently misled as to what had been the recommendation.

### THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

**MR. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): On behalf of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin University, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the sum of £100,000 mentioned in the Evicted Tenants Bill has been arrived at upon any calculation of the probable amounts payable in respect of the interests affected; and whether he will lay such calculations upon the Table of the House before the Second Reading?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The hon. Member will understand that this is not a matter open to very accurate calculations. A rough estimate is the nearest approach to accuracy that can be made, and, upon a survey of the facts, I was led to believe that the sum mentioned in the Bill would carry us a long way on the road.

MR. DANE: Who are to be the arbitrators?

MR. J. MORLEY: Their names will appear in the Bill.

### BRITISH CLAIMS AGAINST CHILI.

SIR E. CLARKE (Plymouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the present state of the negotiations with the Chilian Government for the appointment of a tribunal to arbitrate upon the claims of British subjects for compensation for losses sustained during the late war in Chili; and when the tribunal is likely to sit?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The ratifications of the Convention for the settlement of British claims against Chili were exchanged at Santiaga on Wednesday last, the 25th ultimo. The Commission is to consist of three members—namely, one to represent Great Britain, another to represent Chili, and the third to be neither a Chilian citizen nor a British subject. As the parties to the Convention have been unable to agree respecting the nomination of the third member, His Majesty the King of the Belgians, in accordance with a stipulation in the Convention, will be requested to name one. Claims must be presented within the term of six months from the date of the establishment of the Tribunal, which must commence its labours within six months from the date of the exchange of ratifications.

SIR E. CLARKE: Can the hon. Baronet state the names of the arbitrators already appointed?

SIR E. GREY: Not at this moment.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Where will the Commission sit? May I further ask whether, in the terms of the Commission, the Government will be careful to see that British sailors shall obtain compensation for injuries received, even though they were serving at the time upon foreign ships?

SIR E. GREY: I will inquire into the points raised. I am unable at the present moment to give a definite answer, as the ratifications have only just been exchanged.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the House have an opportunity of seeing the terms of Reference before they are finally settled.

SIR E. GREY promised to bear this in mind. At present we have no details before us.

### DUNPHAIL RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an accident on the Highland Railway (reported in last Saturday's papers) near Dunphail Station to a night passenger train; and whether all the carriages in the train referred to were fitted with automatic brakes, in accordance with the instructions of the Department to the Highland Railway Company last year?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): An inquiry by an Inspecting Officer of the Board of Trade has been ordered, but the facts at present have not yet been reported.

### THE CROFTERS ACT AMENDING BILL.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state on what day he intends to introduce a Bill to amend "The Crofters (Scotland) Holdings Act, 1886"? In putting the Question, the hon. Member said: I should like to ask whether, having regard to the fact that one or more of the Government Whips made efforts to secure a "count" on Friday last——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I do not see the connection between that question and the question on the Paper.

MR. WEIR: Then may I ask the right hon. Gentleman to state whether it is the intention of the Government to include in their Bill of other northern counties in Scotland than those now dealt with under the Crofters Act of 1886?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I cannot name a day for this Bill. The pledges of the Government only cover the extension of the benefits of the Crofters Act to leaseholders in the crofting counties. That is all we have pledged ourselves to do.

## ENGLISH BOATS MADE IN GERMANY.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether an order for boats for the Royal Navy has recently been placed in Germany; and, in such case, what steps were first taken to ensure that the provisions of the English Factory Act and the Fair Contracts Resolution were complied with by the firms who have undertaken these orders?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: (1.) A specimen life-saving boat of special pattern, adapted for service in torpedo boats and destroyers, was offered for trial in May, 1893, by the English agents of a German firm. It was subsequently purchased, and subjected to very severe tests. As a result, it has been decided to adopt this type of boat in a number of the destroyers now building. The contractors for the vessels have to supply the boats: they are not ordered by the Admiralty direct. (2.) The answer given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 14th of March, 1893, applies to this case also. No steps were taken in regard to the points mentioned, as the work was to be done abroad.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman how many of the boats in question had been ordered, and whether they will be marked "made in Germany" while flying the British ensign?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I cannot say how many have been ordered. It depends on the contractors whether they will be made in Germany or in England.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: But the boats are to be paid for out of public money. Does not the right hon. Gentleman know how many have been ordered?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: We know the number of torpedo destroyers ordered, but not the number of boats.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: Then on a future day I will ask how many of these boats have been ordered at the cost of the taxpayer?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is there any reason which renders British-built torpedo destroyers less capable of carrying British built boats than other ships?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The boats which have to be carried on these destroyers are necessarily light and of peculiar build, and have to be boats compressed into a very small space. It is on that ground that special boats have been ordered. We take the invention we consider the best, whether the boat be of German or of English manufacture.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But if that applies to torpedo destroyers, does it not apply more strongly to torpedo boats?

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: Will the English Factory Act and the Fair Contracts Resolution of this House apply in Germany?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: If my hon. Friend will look at the answer I have given him, he will see that I have already replied to that question.

MR. DANE: Is there any reason why the boats should not be built either in England or in Ireland?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: We sincerely hope they will be built in England. Although they are a German invention they are the best boats we can find, and therefore we have ordered them.

## THE CROFTERS ACT.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can state on what day he will be able to introduce the Crofters Act Amendment Bill; in extending the benefits of the Act to leaseholders, will he consider the expediency of including all tenants paying annual rents up to £50; will he have regard to the class of tenants who at the passing of the Act were leaseholders, but whose leases having since expired are now tenants-at-will, and therefore deprived of the benefits of the Act; and when the opportunity comes for the increase of small holdings, will he consider the necessity of replacing on the land the cottar class, who are really the same people, but, having been evicted from their former holdings, are now without land at all? In putting the question, the hon. Member said: I would not have troubled the House with this question had the Government not failed to keep a House on Friday night.

**Sir G. TREVELYAN:** I cannot name a day for introducing the Bill, nor can I undertake to state beforehand its provisions. But all points in connection with the matter, including those mentioned in the question, will be carefully considered.

**Dr. MACGREGOR:** Does the right hon. Gentleman not remember that he promised the Bill immediately after the Local Government Bill?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN:** I did not say "immediately after;" I said "subsequent to" the Local Government Bill.

**Dr. MACGREGOR:** Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to evade his pledge?

[No answer was given.]

### PLEURO-PNEUMONIA IN KENT.

**Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN** (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the report is correct that pleuro-pneumonia has broken out in the Isle of Thanet; and whether, if it should prove to have been contracted from animals imported from abroad, he will still adhere to his determination to allow the importation of live stock from Canada?

**Mr. H. GARDNER:** I much regret to say that it is the case that an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia has occurred in the Isle of Thanet. So far as our inquiries have yet gone, they indicate that the disease is attributable to two cows brought to the premises from Hendon in August last, and there is nothing whatever to suggest that it was contracted from animals imported from abroad.

**Mr. JAMES LOWTHER:** Can the right hon. Gentleman say at what place or places in the Isle of Thanet the outbreak took place, and whether the disease has since spread?

**Mr. H. GARDNER:** Yes, Sir; I happened to be there yesterday; it was at Minster.

**Mr. CHAPLIN:** Can the right hon. Gentleman say how long the country has been free from outbreaks prior to this occurrence? What was the date of the last one?

**Mr. H. GARDNER:** I cannot exactly state the date. I believe there has been no previous outbreak this year.

**Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN:** The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of my question.

**Mr. H. GARDNER:** I have answered it.

### THE WELSH DISESTABLISHMENT BILL.

**Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN:** I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, should the English Church in Wales Disestablishment Bill become law, any religious services other than those of the Church of England will be permitted in the Welsh cathedrals?

**Mr. ASQUITH:** The property in the cathedrals will be vested in the Commissioners, upon whom will be cast the burden of maintaining them out of the funds in their hands. But there is no intention to interfere with the use of the cathedrals, and so long as the Church body so desires they will continue to be applied to their present purpose, and to no other.

**Mr. W. JOHNSTON:** Can the right hon. Gentleman say when he expects this Bill to become law?

[No answer was given.]

### JAMAICA DOCKYARD.

**Mr. GIBSON BOWLES:** I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state upon what grounds Her Majesty's Government have come to the decision to depart from the engagement they gave last year that the Jamaica Dockyard should be abolished; whether the abolition of this dockyard was last year decided upon in accordance with the recommendation of the Admiral on the Station; and whether any subsequent recommendation of a contrary tenour has since been received from that Admiral?

**Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH:** I am not aware of any engagement having been given last year that the Jamaica Naval Yard should be abolished. The present Admiral on the Station is in favour of a reduction of the establishment, his opinion being based on the use made of Port Royal by Her Majesty's ships stationed in the West Indies in peace time. A Committee was appointed by the Admiral to report on the subject of the proposed reductions, and their Report has been received and considered. It has been decided not to make any change at present.

***Mr. GIBSON BOWLES:** Was the engagement not given in this House?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: If the hon. Member will refresh his memory by reference to the *Parliamentary Debates* he will find that what I have stated is accurate.

### BRITISH HONDURAS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the fact that six months has now elapsed since Her Majesty's Government decided to grant the prayer of the Petition of the Colonists of British Honduras for a gold standard of currency, whether the necessary arrangements have now been completed for bringing the new Currency Law into force; and, if not, when such may be expected to be the case?

MR. S. BUXTON: The Secretary of State has been furnished with the views of the Colonists as to the subsidiary questions involved in the introduction of a gold standard, and he is now considering, in conjunction with the Treasury, the details of the necessary arrangements, but no date can yet be fixed on which the change of currency will be brought into operation.

### IMPORTATION OF GERMAN SPIRITS INTO IRELAND.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that large quantities of German spirit are imported into Dublin, Cork, and Belfast annually, and sold as Irish whisky; whether he is aware that this spirit costs only 1s. 6d. per gallon, whilst the Irish whisky costs from 4s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. duty free; and whether any means are now in force, or will be adopted by the authorities, to protect both the manufacturers and consumers in Ireland from deceptive foreign competition?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I am informed that about 12,000 gallons of German spirit were imported into Ireland last year, at about 1s. 6d. per gallon. This is not a large amount, when compared with the 8,000,000 gallons made, or the 4,400,000 gallons consumed in that country. So long as the German spirit remains in bond, the Customs Regulations do not allow it to be mixed with British spirits for home consumption. I have no official information as to the disposal of the spirit after it is cleared for home consumption, but I understand that a considerable portion is used for methylation. If it is offered for sale under a false trade description, the general provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act would apply.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is it not a fact that while the Customs prohibit, the Excise allow the practice?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot say.

MR. FIELD: Has a prosecution ever been initiated by the Government under the Merchandise Marks Act?

[No answer was returned.]

### INCOME TAX IN IRELAND.

MR. E. BARRY (Cork Co., S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Guardians of the poor in Ireland are assessable for Income Tax in respect of losses derivable from rent of cottages built under the Labourers (Ireland) Act; and whether any steps will be taken to relieve the Guardians from taxation on their losses?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am not aware that Guardians of the poor in Ireland receive, or are entitled to receive, any special treatment in this connection. If the hon. Member will give me particulars of any special case, I will have it inquired into.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in every case the amount paid by the Guardians to the Treasury far exceeds the receipts of the Guardians? How does the right hon. Gentleman think the Guardians are to be assessed to Income Tax in respect of a loss?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am obliged to make inquiries in these matters, and I must ask for notice.

### REGISTRATION EXPENSES.

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what will be the additional expense of making a second Register in each year, and of holding the elections on one day?

MR. J. MORLEY (who replied) said: It is very difficult to form an accurate opinion as to the additional cost of double registration, necessitating double printing of the Register. The additional cost of holding the elections on one day will probably be that of a few extra ballot boxes. But the matter may be discussed in Committee.

LORD R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): On whom will the cost of the double registration fall—on the candidates or on the public?

MR. J. MORLEY: The incidence of cost will be the same in the second revision as in the first.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: On the candidate?

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: The right hon. Gentleman has not given any answer whatever to my question. Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the holding of the elections on one day will be only a question of a few more ballot-boxes, and that the question of a second registration is merely one of printing?

MR. J. MORLEY: I said that the main element of the cost in registration now is that of double printing—the Overseers' List and afterwards the Register; a change, however, may be made in that. That, however, is one of the reasons why it is impossible to form an accurate estimate of printing. As to the cost of polling on one day, I do not see what extra cost will be involved, except for the provision of a few extra ballot-boxes.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: Does the expense of printing exceed the cost of revision? Before we discuss the question we ought to know what will be the cost.

MR. J. MORLEY: If the right hon. Gentleman will refer to the provisions of the Bill he will be able to satisfy himself.

MR. DARLING: Is it contemplated that Revising Barristers are to be employed twice and to be remunerated only once?

[No answer was given.]

*SIR J. LUBBOCK: I will put the questions down again a few days hence, when I hope my right hon. Friend will be able to give some answer.

### THE ESTATE DUTY.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: On behalf of the hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University, I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in determining the rate of Estate Duty to be paid by tenant purchasers in Ireland under the Land Purchase Acts, the value of tenant right and the tenant's interest in the holding, together with his stock and other property, will be added to the interest acquired by the purchase of the landlord's interest under the said Acts?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have already communicated to the hon. and learned Member the fact that I am awaiting the arrival of certain particulars from Ireland.

### THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that notice is given in *The London Gazette* of the 27th of April that the Queen's Birthday will be celebrated in London alone on Saturday the 26th of May next, and at all other stations, Naval and Military, on Thursday the 24th of May next; and whether he can arrange so that Her Majesty's Birthday may be kept by Londoners also on the 24th of May, as will be the case by Her Majesty's subjects elsewhere all over the world?

SIR W. HARCOURT: This arrangement belongs to a much higher authority than I can pretend to, and I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member any information. I am, however, having inquiry made.

### UGANDA.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, now that the Debate on the Scotch Standing Committee is completed, whether he will carry out his promise of the 23rd of April and name an early day for the postponed discussion of the proposed Uganda settlement?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Government cannot make any arrangements for the Debate on Uganda until the Debate on the First Reading of the Registration Bill and the Debate on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill has been concluded. The Budget Bill will be taken on Monday.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: When will the Second Reading of the Budget Bill be taken?

SIR W. HARCOURT: On Monday.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Then the right hon. Gentleman will not take the Debate till after Monday.

Sir W. HARCOURT: No.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: Will the right hon. Gentleman promise it shall not be taken until after the Whitsuntide Recess?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Our anxiety is to put it down on the first fair chance. I really cannot say what will be done until we have made progress with the other business before the House.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: What will be the business the first day after the Recess?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

### VALUATION OF REAL ESTATE.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer is it the practice at present, when it is required to ascertain the principal value of real estate for the purpose of existing duties, to ascertain it under (a) sub-section (5) of Section 6 of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1889," by taking 24 years' purchase of its net annual value; and, if so, is there any reason why this method cannot be continued instead of the method of valuation?

*Sir W. HARCOURT: The reason why the method of valuation adopted in the Act of 1889 cannot be continued in regard to real estate is because it fixes an arbitrary maximum which may in some cases give a most unfair advantage to real, as compared with personal, property.

### THE DEATH DUTIES.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has had prepared any Papers or Accounts showing the effect of the alterations in the Death Duties, so as to exhibit the result of those alterations in a few typical instances; and, if so, whether he has any objection to lay such Papers or Accounts upon the Table of the House?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I answered this question the other day at the instance of the hon. Member for Liverpool.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Has the right hon. Gentleman had no Papers prepared?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes; I have had many Papers prepared, but they are not of a nature to be presented to Parliament.

### SUCCESSION DUTY AND ESTATE DUTY.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the charge of Estate Duty imposed by the Finance Bill will be deducted from the principal value of unsettled real property passing by a death before the charge of Succession Duty is levied theron, or whether the Succession Duty will be chargeable on the whole principal value without any deduction being made therefrom for the Estate Duty; and whether in the case of settled real estate, the Estate Duty will be chargeable upon the total principal value of the estate, and the further Estate Duty of 1 per cent. also on the total principal value of the estate without any deduction therefrom of the Estate Duty, and finally the Succession Duty also on the total principal value without any deduction therefrom of the Estate Duty and the further Estate Duty?

Sir W. HARCOURT: This is a point receiving my serious consideration, and if the hon. Member will postpone his question for a few days I shall be able to give him a more complete answer.

### THE NEW CHARGES ON REAL ESTATE.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether at the death of an owner of real estate valued at £101,000, with a gross income of £3,000, a lineal successor of the age of 35 would pay Death Duties at the present time of about £1,720, whereas under the new scheme he would have to pay £6,060; whether in the case of the above estate being left to children in portions of £10,000, each child under the new scheme would have to pay 6 per cent., or £600 Death Duty; and whether, if an estate valued at £10,000 were left to one child, that child would under the new scheme only pay 3 per cent., or £300?

*Sir W. HARCOURT: In answer to the first part of the question, I have to say that a person leaving £101,000 in real estate will, according to the proposals of the Government, pay by instalments exactly the same sum as if he left £101,000 in personalty. It is quite true that under the existing law the owner of realty pays a very much smaller amount. The object of the proposals of the Government is to redress that inequality and injustice. The two latter questions are founded on a misconception of the nature of the new Estate Duty. That new Estate Duty, like the Probate Duty, is charged upon the total value of the *corpus* of the estate, and has no regard whatever to the portion left to children or other persons amongst whom the estate may be subsequently divided. These are questions which belong to the Legacy and Succession Duty, which are wholly distinct from the Estate Duty.

Mr. JEFFREYS: But is it not a fact that, whereas at present a successor to a real estate with a gross income of £3,000 now only pays £1,720, under the new duties he will have to pay £6,060?

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes; if the income is net, not gross. The reason for the reform is that real estate now pays less than personalty.

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): In regard to that may I ask on what figures the right hon. Gentleman based the calculation that real estate would, under the new duty, pay only double what it had hitherto paid?

*Sir W. HARCOURT: I gave the figures in my Financial Statement. The authorities of the Inland Revenue formed an estimate on the basis of the information in their possession, and on that estimate the Government has acted. Experience has shown that the estimates of the Department are wonderfully accurate, but I do not conceal from the House the fact that in this case the estimate is much more conjectural than usual.

Mr. BRODRICK: May we take it that the right hon. Gentleman, in asserting that the landlords would pay only between £200,000 and £300,000 extra, was relying upon a conjectural estimate?

*Sir W. HARCOURT: I have given the best estimate which can be made by most experienced persons.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us an estimate showing the figures on which he comes to the conclusion that the contemplated duty on real estate will be double that now paid? May I move for it as a Return?

Sir W. HARCOURT: It is impossible to form an accurate estimate, but I repeat that the Inland Revenue Authorities have given me the best they can, conjectural though it is.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### PERIOD OF QUALIFICATION AND ELECTIONS BILL.—(No. 161.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

*Sir E. CLARKE (Plymouth): I rise to ask the House to decline to accept the Second Reading of this Bill, and, in declining to do so, to give a specific and important reason for taking that course. I should propose to ask the House to say that it—

> "Declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power."

I am much indebted to the courtesy of my hon. Friend the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) for allowing me to take precedence with this Amendment, although he himself had put one down upon the Paper, and although his knowledge of Parliamentary and electoral matters fully qualified him to take the lead in this discussion. I am anxious to ask the House to accept a proposition which involves not simply the rejection of this Bill, but a statement by the House of a principle which is of extreme importance, and by which I hope the House will be governed in any of its dealings with the question of electoral reform. I do not, of course, suggest that because there are many inequalities you are wrong in redressing some when you have not time to deal with them all. Of course, that would be an unpractical proposal. But what I do suggest is this—that where, in such a system as our representative system, you have large and glaring inequalities and anomalies, the existence of which no one can deny, the mischief of which has been experienced in our practical Parliamentary life, and the remedy for which is perfectly clear, and has already been pointed out by the responsible Government of the Crown, you ought not to leave these glaring inequalities unredressed, and pretend that you are amending the representative system by correcting inequalities the anomalies of which are disputed, which are not matters of discussion and dispute between us, which have not produced any mischief that anyone can point to, and which, as far as our experience and the prospects of this Bill show, are not likely to be remedied without a most serious interference with and disturbance of our electoral system in many of its most important parts. In discharging the duty which has been given to me, I, of course, have to deal in the first place with the proposition in the Amendment which refers to the extensive changes made in the Bill now before the House. I propose to ask the House to examine the Bill and to realise for itself what an enormous change in our political system would be effected by the acceptance of a measure which shields itself under the modest but singularly clumsy title that disfigures the Bill now before the House. The question is one of importance, because if you deal, and deal in a manner which involves serious change, with minor difficulties, you give the sanction of your tolerance to larger anomalies, the mischief of which can be easily pointed out and must indeed be universally confessed. We have an interesting subject of contemplation in the provisions of this Bill and in the speech by which it was commended to the House. It is not long since we had from the same Ministry, but from another of its Members, a different Registration Bill. Last year the present Secretary for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who certainly had immediate knowledge of the particular matters with which he was dealing, brought forward a Bill which I suppose represented the then opinions and desires of Her Majesty's Government. This year a different Minister (Mr. J. Morley) brings in a different Bill. The first subject of wonderment is why that particular Minister should have been chosen to propose this Bill to the House. Of course, the Government were entitled to choose their own spokesman, nor could they choose a spokesman more welcome to the House, whatever proposals he had to make, more courteous in debate, and more pleasant in discussion than the right hon. Gentleman; but his personal acceptability does not remove the wonderment with which one sees that he has been chosen to take charge of the only two business proposals of the present Session. He is not, as far as I know, specially acquainted with electoral matters; and it surely is a little hard upon him that he who, of all men in the House of Commons, must most keenly realise, sometimes with contentment and sometimes, I think, with embarrassment, the grave anomaly to which I shall presently have to call the attention of the House, should be chosen to propose this Bill, especially when his colleagues know that his bosom will presently be racked with anxiety as to the competing claims of the evicted tenants of Ireland and the non-registered electors of Great Britain, who will be challenging each other for supremacy for their claim on his attention. Apparently, the right hon. Gentleman has the control of the whole of the legislative business that the Government expect to get through in the present Session. I think we may see presently, when we come to examine one or two of the provisions of the Bill, why it has not been proposed to us by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. When we ask why some of the provisions of last year's Bill do not reappear now, I think perhaps the Secretary for India may in moments of candour have to admit that there have been certain incidents in the history of the registration proposals of the Government which show that those proposals have not been made exactly with the view of improving the electoral system of this country. Not only have we a different Minister, but we have a different Bill. It differs in some interesting respects. We were told last year that the Bill then proposed was a Registration Bill, and that because it was a Registration Bill certain important questions were excluded from its provisions. When the Secretary for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was speaking in the House last year he said—

> "It has been suggested that I should introduce a measure dealing with the plural or multiple vote; but that has really nothing to do with registration and will be dealt with separately. I have also been asked to include in the Bill clauses for the improvement of the method of holding elections; but this is not an Election Bill"—

he could not have said that now—

> "and however great an improvement it might be to arrange that all elections should take place on the same day, the subject cannot find a place in the present measure, which is confined simply and solely to the reform of registration."

He therefore excluded the subject of One Man One Vote, and the subject of elections on the same day, because that was purely a Registration Bill. This year the spokesman of the Government has excluded from their Bill other matters which were included in last year's measure, and he has explained that he has done so because they cannot find place in a Registration Bill. Last year's proposals contained an important provision with regard to the registration of lodgers. It was strictly a registration proposal, and had nothing to do with the franchise, so that it quite appropriately found its place in that Bill. Why is it not in the Bill of this year? I think we know that the election agents of the Party opposite informed them that the result of the adoption of that provision might possibly be injurious to the political balance in a good many constituencies. The proposal which was strictly registration, and was included in the Registration Bill of last year, is struck out from the present Bill. But, curiously enough, its being struck out is defended on the same ground which was used to defend the exclusion of the One Man One Vote last year; and when the Chief Secretary for Ireland proposed this Bill, and came to touch on the lodger question, he said that must be excluded from the Bill because it went deep down into the question of the franchise. Why, the proposal of the Government last year did not touch the franchise at all, and the reason the right hon. Gentleman gave for not including it this year was not the real reason, because this proposal, framed as it was last year, did not go deep down into the franchise, or touch franchise at all. There is one other very serious omission in the Bill which I have noticed with interest. Last year there was a proposal with regard to successive occupation—and there are cases which I shall have occasion to show presently in regard to successive occupation that are clearly registration questions and do not touch the franchise at all. It was in last year's Bill; will the Government put it back again in Committee; if so, why not put it in this Bill? The differences that I have pointed out between the two Bills are somewhat interesting, and they, I think, indicate to us that the alterations that have been made in the Bill cannot have been made for the purpose of dealing with registration, and with registration in a fair way. Before I go on to examine the proposals of this Bill, I would like to point out to the House one matter which no Registration Bill ought to leave untouched, but which this Bill leaves absolutely untouched. The great difficulty perhaps with regard to registration which now exists is the difference between householders and lodgers. It is the law now, strange as it may seem, that if you have two houses standing side by side, exactly similar in construction, all let out in tenements, the persons occupying these tenements being precisely of the same occupation, and character, and capacity of franchise, if the landlord lives in one house the occupiers cannot get the franchise, and if the landlord does not live in the next house the occupiers do get the franchise. There never was a more remarkable example of that than the case that was argued by the hon. and learned Member for Louth (Mr. T. M. Healy) in the year 1886. It was a case in which he was defending the votes of no less than 97 persons who occupied, as inhabitants or householders, premises for which a Parliamentary vote could be given. Those 97 persons were all struck off the list, in spite of the efforts of the hon. and learned Gentleman, because the landlord lived in the house, and because "The Sanitary Authority would look to him if there was any question of its cleanliness." Certainly those 97 persons were struck off for no other reason; and that has been perpetuated by an Act of Parliament. In 1885, when, I think, the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) had the conduct of the Bill that passed through this House, and had to frame the Schedule, there was a provision in the Schedule—which has been repealed since—that if a landlord lived in the house he ought not to return the names of the occupiers in that house under him, although if he were not living there they would be entitled to the franchise. Of all the anomalies, of all the mischiefs, that exist in our registration, the distinction between the householder and the lodger, which has become in many cases an artificial distinction, is the most glaring and absurd, and in this Bill there is not the smallest attempt to remedy it. I have pointed out one very important want in this Bill; but I should like to say the main attack that I make on this Bill is, that it is not an honest attempt to deal with the reform of registration, but is, strictly speaking, an Election Bill. Apart from that, the main comment I make on it is that, in defiance of all the principles to which hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite have continually pledged themselves for years past, it tends to make registration more expensive, it tends to throw an immense burden not only on the constituencies, but upon all the candidates and Members for constituencies, and thereby closes up the avenues that are at present open, or, at all events, partially open, to the House of Commons, to those who are not endowed with much wealth, or who do not care to make themselves the mere servants of a political organisation. What is it we have understood to be the great desire of hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Party opposite? We have understood their principle was that the election of Representatives of Parliament was a national concern; that the expense of preparing a Register should be borne by the people at large; that the process of getting voters upon the Register and kept there should be made so easy and economical as not to require either very great trouble on the part of the elector, or very great expenditure on the part of any political Party. Nay, they have gone so far as to say that they would desire, many of them, that an allowance of public money should be paid to Members who have seats in this House. And one object of that allowance of public money, as we have always understood, was that poor men, men who had not very large means to spend on political matters, might be able to find their way to this House. If this Bill is accepted all that will be absolutely over and done with. If they carry this Bill they will have set up against such men as they profess to desire to see in this House, they will have set up against working-class candidates, an impassable barrier, and will have imposed on all the Members of this House and all men who seek to obtain election in a constituency a pecuniary burden, the extent of which I will presently try to ascertain and show to the House, but which will be so severe that more than ever it will be necessary to be a rich man, unless, indeed, a man is content to become the mere servant of a political organisation. If this were a real Registration Bill, if this were an honest attempt to reform the Registration Laws of this country, I say, for myself, and I am sure for many on this side, the Government would find no steadier supporters amongst the ranks of their own supporters than they would find in us in endeavouring to pass a really good Bill. Two years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax proposed his Bill for the reform of registration, I was allowed to speak from that side of the House, and on the part of the Government, in answer to the Bill, and I said, not for myself only, but for others for whom I was allowed to speak, that we thought that when Parliament had decided that a certain class of persons were to exercise the franchise, it was our duty to see that there should be no artificial obstacles to prevent the enjoyment of that right; that it was our duty to make such arrangements as should enable the persons qualified according to our law to get easily on the Register, and to have their names kept there when they are on. I need not quote my own words on this matter, but I may be allowed to quote the words of my lamented Friend, Mr. Edward Stanhope, who last year, speaking from this side of the House, spoke for us on the question of the Registration Bill then introduced—

> "We think that those voters who are declared by Parliament to be qualified to vote should be put on the Register without any unreasonable delay, and that they should not be taken off the Register for the trifling causes for which many are now deprived of the franchise; but, at the same time, every precaution should be taken for the purpose of preventing personation."

Those are the principles on which we have been prepared to deal, and are prepared to deal, with any proposals for the amendment of the Registration Law. But what I want, and undertake, to show the House is that the proposals now made are not proposals in that direction at all, but proposals which contain in them elements of the highest mischief, against which hon. Gentlemen opposite, as well as ourselves, have protested. I would like to refer to the last authoritative pronouncement of a Committee of this House with regard to the question of registration. I believe that before we deal effectively with the question of registration it will be necessary to have a Select Committee on the subject, and I think we have had no Committee since the year 1868.

Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): Yes, since that date.

Sir E. CLARKE: I was not aware of that, and I daresay we shall hear something about it presently, of its constitution and its recommendations; but in 1868 there was a Committee of this House of singular authority and importance, of which the late Sir Stafford Northcote, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), and the hon. Member for Carnarvon (Mr. Rathbone) were Members, and another Member, and the Chairman of the Committee was the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the course of their interesting and important Report a passage was inserted which I ask the House to allow me to read, and, reluctant as I am to inflict long extracts upon the House, the House will readily admit that the authorship of the passage and its contents justify my reading it. That Committee said—

> "The existing Law of Registration in boroughs is founded on the principle that such registration is the business of the State, and ought to be placed as far as possible beyond the influence alike of the ignorance or apathy of the citizens and of the interested action of political agents. But by the operation of the registration system as it works at present a large percentage of persons entitled to vote can only obtain the franchise by a troublesome course of proceedings instituted either by themselves or by others in their behalf.
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> This result operates with hardship upon weekly-wage voters whom it is the special object of recent legislation to enfranchise, and the redress of their grievances becomes the necessary corollary of the Reform Act of 1867. To the artizan or labourer the trouble and loss of time sustained in making a claim comes as a severe pecuniary fine; he may lose several days' wages and risk the loss of permanent employment; and, after all, he may be defeated by technical objections or accidental blunders for which he is not responsible and which arise from the inexperience or negligence of the persons making out the list. This state of things leaves a result objectionable in principle and mischievous in practice.
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> When it is found that the working men cannot bear the burden of sustaining their own rights, party political organisations are formed for the purpose of discharging that duty which the law assumes to be fulfilled by the Public Authority. The correction of the errors of the Overseers' Lists is undertaken by rival Registration Associations. An expensive machinery is set to work to strike off assumed opponents and to place upon the Register persons who are assumed to be adherents, frequently on the very ground that their vote is obtained at the expense of those who sustain the claim. The action of such associations is necessarily prejudicial to the independence of a constituency, and not only affords the means, but supplies a grave temptation, to illegitimate practices and corrupt inducements, whilst, at the same time, the imperfect operation of the responsible Registration Authority justifies their existence and forms an excuse for their operations. It is notoriously difficult to discriminate between money legitimately expended in registration and money which, under the name of registration, is practically employed to corrupt a constituency."

Now, Sir, in the year 1868 those words were written by the right hon. Gentleman, and they were unanimously accepted by an important Committee, and presented to the House, and they are as true to-day as they were then. The difficulties exist of establishing and getting the votes on the Register: voters are compelled to come on through the agency of political organisations, which thus throws them into the hands of those organisations and affords opportunity for corrupt influences being exercised on both sides. But if that is true—and the right hon. Gentleman agrees with me that it is true—what is the excuse for now putting forward a Bill which, so far from remedying the mischief which was confessed and admitted 26 years ago, will make that mischief a great deal worse and rivet upon candidates, members, and constituencies, the authority of political organisations? Last year, when I heard a Registration Bill proposed, I did hope the effect of that Bill would be to give somewhat more freedom to the individual in our constituencies, and I hoped it all the more because, when the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India moved that Bill, he made a speech in which he almost repeated, though he made them by his language his own, the words I have just read from the right hon. Gentleman's Report in 1868, and he declared one of the objects of the Bill was to release the constituencies of that necessity of submitting to political organisations, which in itself was a mischief, and might lead to corrupt influences; and the Bill, on that ground, was welcomed with enthusiasm by many of those who were in the House. Among those who spoke most strongly upon the matter was the hon. and learned Member for Louth (Mr. T. M. Healy), and I quote a few words of his—

> "The reason why I principally support this Bill and its application to Ireland is that it will make a great reduction in the burdens which rest upon the people. Not only will it make savings in the pocket of the ratepayers, but also in the pockets of candidates and in the funds of Party Associations. These savings might be calculated by tens of thousands of pounds."

And in a spirit with which I entirely sympathise, and in language which I most gladly re-echo, the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. T. M. Healy) gave his welcome to the Bill that would have that effect. I shall be most anxious to hear what he will say with regard to this Bill, which proceeds in precisely the contrary direction, which increases largely the burden of the ratepayers, and adds enormously to the authority and power of political organisations. Now, Sir, the very first proposal contained in the Bill shows us what will happen. It is a proposal that, instead of one revision in the year, we shall have two revisions. There is much to be said for that proposal. I do not think, if you take either side of the House, you would find entire agreement between them as to the way the Registration Laws should be reformed. It is said at present there is a hardship because of the 12 months' residence which is required to qualify for a vote. The mischief is not in the 12 months' qualification. If the 12 months' qualification were retained, and you had a system that enabled a man at the end of 12 months to come immediately on the Register, and then to exercise the franchise in the place in which up to that time he had lived, I believe there would be no complaint of the 12 months; that it would be accepted that 12 months is not more than might reasonably be required as a guarantee of that substantial and continued interest in the affairs of the constituency which one would desire to have from those dealing with the election of Members. But the real grievance is not the 12 months, but the fact that it is long after the expiration of the 12 months before the man is able to exercise his vote. At the present time we know it may be two and a-half years after a man begins to occupy qualifying premises before he is able to get on the Register for those premises, and the real sense of grievance that is felt amongst our people is the grievance of those men who have fulfilled the 12 months' residence, but are kept a year, 15, or 18 months before exercising the franchise, and the giving a protracted period of discussion and examination after the end of the 12 months creates another and a very serious difficulty. You take your Register from persons resident in particular districts up to the 24th of June in one year, but they do not then exercise the vote until after the first day in January, and the consequence is that during the interval that elapses between acquiring the right to vote and the opportunity to exercise it, a change has taken place in the constituency which, when you come to test its opinion in the following year, makes it extremely difficult, and leaves you a constituency to deal with that does not then live within the district you are dealing with. Perhaps no better illustration could be given than the borough in which a contested election is now going on, the borough of Hackney. Although only four months have passed, I believe, since the Register came into force, out of something like 11,000 voters 2,500 have gone outside the limit of the constituency. Of course, there is one way of dealing with that, which would be to establish a system by which there should be as far as possible an automatic registration of persons who had fulfilled the qualifying period. Another remedy that has been suggested, and widely accepted, is that the length of the qualifying period should itself be reduced. I have always thought the reduction in the length of the qualifying period was of far less importance than hastening the process by which the qualified person should become legally capable of voting, and I believe that if we had a Select Committee by which this matter could be examined simply as a matter of business, with the common desire to secure the power of voting to those qualified under the laws respecting the franchise, I believe we should come to a satisfactory conclusion on that basis. The conclusion the Government have come to is a very serious and dangerous conclusion. They propose to set up two registrations, two revisions, instead of one; that is to say, they propose to duplicate the work that is done by the Local Authorities; and they propose, which is quite as important, to duplicate the work and the expense that is thrown on the candidates at elections. This is a grave matter. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir J. Lubbock) asked a question just now of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to his calculation of the expense that would be involved by this Bill. The right hon. Baronet could hardly expect to get any positive answer to his question, because it is a difficult matter to calculate, and I do not see how the right hon. Gentleman could obtain information on it to enable him to answer with any great positiveness. But I have taken a good deal of trouble to calculate the amount that will be involved. My calculation is that the cost of registration to the Local Authorities at the present time is a sum of £300,000 a year, and I believe I have taken pains to be as moderate as possible, and in any figure I give I think I shall be found to be under the mark. I believe it costs at the present time £300,000, and I believe the effect of this Bill, framed as it is, and especially as it disassociates the parochial list from the rate book, and throws on the persons responsible for the list the necessity of further work than they at present go through will be to double that expenditure. I need not trouble the House with details from the different places from which I have sought information; but I may mention, for instance, that in the borough of Liverpool, which has nine seats, the expense of registration to the Local Authority is about £4,000 a year, or something like £500 for each seat. In the three boroughs of Hackney the expense from public sources is about £1,200 a year, including, of course, the returning officer's expenses in connection therewith, and the best judgment I can form is that £300,000 is the present cost to the rates, and that will be doubled by the Bill which the Government propose. But I do not think that is the most serious part of the case. If it were necessary, for the purpose of giving us a true electoral roll which would be in all respects fair and satisfactory, and to which all politicians or persons could look with confidence, I do not think the cost would be too great, and the constituencies would not object; but the mischief is that while spending this £600,000 a year in public expenditure to make your electoral roll, the electoral roll, after all, will represent, not the result of the responsible work of public officials, but the result of the action of political organisations. Now, I have endeavoured to make some calculation as to the amount now spent by candidates and Members in different areas in carrying forward their private share of the registration work. When I was speaking in 1892, I said I believed £350,000 a year was spent by the political organisations in the constituencies. I have reason to believe that I greatly understated it, and that it would come to at least £500,000, spent by Members and candidates, or political adherents who subscribe in boroughs and counties to relieve Members and candidates from this expenditure. That amount will be almost doubled under the Bill, but if it were increased by only one-half, the result would be that you would have an electoral roll which is made up by an expenditure of £600,000 from the localities, and an expenditure by Members and candidates of £750,000, and which would then only represent the activity of the political organisations and not the true result of the work of an official and impartial authority. I submit that to the careful consideration of the House, and I venture to say at this point that I have justified what I said when I contended this Bill went directly counter to the principles which have been promulgated by hon. Members. How can they expect working men Members, if they make their registration system such that the man who stands for a constituency must spend £400 or £500 a year out of his own pocket or the pockets of his friends, to carry on the registration work? How can you expect to give an opening to persons independent of Party influence if you make it necessary to keep going the machinery of canvassing a constituency and testing the correctness of the Register from one end of the year to another instead of for a few weeks only, as at present? That would be undoubtedly necessary if you are to have two revisions, two sets of notices, two sets of objections, and two sets of appeals. Now, Sir, with regard to the qualifying period and the double registration, I venture to put this as a very serious matter for the Government to consider, and I venture to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer—and I hope he will let me put it to him at this moment as one who does desire to improve the Registration Laws and to get a good Register cheaply,—whether this Bill will not go far to increase, to stereotype, and render permanent those mischiefs which in 1886 he so admirably denounced. I do not wish to dwell on details at this stage, and the House will forgive me if I have trespassed too far in that regard. I pass to the next point. It is proposed to abolish the rating qualification; and here again the Government are creating a great difficulty, and the mischief is in the same direction as that which I have already pointed out. It is said that the rating qualification is only evidence, and that since there is no longer the requirement of personal payment of the rates, there is no object in keeping the system in existence. That does not apply, of course, to Scotland. Out of 600,000 voters on the Scotch Register, no less than 63,000 lose their qualification because they have not paid their rates. It is a most important and serious proposition to take away the pressure which is now advantageously exercised in the public interest for the payment of rates. I believe the Government will find if they inquire that there is always a large payment of rates at the end of the qualifying period, and just before the vote is to be claimed. A man does not like to expose himself to the reproach from his fellows that he is not one who has borne his share of the public burden, or that he is one who has lost his electoral privileges for non-payment of rates. It is important that the rates should be regularly paid, and the arrangement we now have as to registration helps to secure the regular and proper payment of rates, though that is collateral to the main purpose of the registration system. A matter I ventured to put before the House in 1892 and which I still ask it to consider is this. It is in my belief of the greatest importance that the roll of electors should not be prepared simply for political purposes, but should have its basis and foundation in the fact that it has been prepared by some Public Authority for purposes other than those distinctly political. Now the overseer puts the names on the rate book. It is his duty to put on the names of those who are rated. It is his duty to send out to the occupier of the house a notice calling on him to give the name of the occupier in that house in order that it may be put —where? Not merely on the electoral roll, but in a separate column of the rate book. I do not wish to overstate this point. I know that the compound householder has interfered with such an arrangement; but there is no reason for ceasing to regard the rate book as the basis of the registration. The next proposal is that all the polling should take place on the same day—a proposal which was excluded from the Bill of last year. With regard to that, I should like to say it seems to me to be an unreasonable proposal, and I cannot see on what grounds it has been made. It is clearly an unreasonable proposal in this way: the effect of it would be either to lengthen unduly the period of the contest in the boroughs, or to shorten unduly the period of the contest in the counties. No one can pretend that a borough election requires so long a period as an election in a large and scattered constituency, where a candidate must necessarily have a much longer time, in order to make himself even known by name or by face to the electors. As to Saturday being fixed as the polling day, if the Government will make inquiries they will find that in many parts of the country Saturday would be an extremely inconvenient day, though it would not make the smallest difference as far as Parties are concerned. To have all polls on Saturday, and especially all county polls, when the counting of the votes cannot take place the same night, so that the excitement and disturbance of a contested election will be continued through Sunday, is a proposal which the House ought not lightly to accept without much stronger reasons for it than the Government have given. But I now come to the main objection I have to the Bill, which is in regard to the proposal to abolish the plural vote. It is said that the plural vote is an anomaly. I deny that absolutely. The anomaly would be for every man to have the same vote. It would be an anomaly to give the same authority and influence in the election to the man who has by education and habit the capacity for dealing with public affairs, and has position and responsibility, as to the man who, by the accident of birth, has been untrained in public affairs and uneducated in the history of public life. To give two such persons the same weight in public affairs is an anomaly; and that anomaly is only partially redressed by the existing system of plural voting. Perhaps, in the opinion of some, I am giving expression to an unpopular doctrine, because the doctrine of the absolute and necessary equality of all members of the community has become popular in many quarters now. [*Cheers.*] I am glad to hear those cheers, because they will justify the quotation which I am about to make. It is not so very long ago since the Liberal Party recognised Mr. John Stuart Mill as a great authority on public affairs. I remember the chorus of welcome which greeted Mr. Mill when he rose to address the House for the first time in 1866, as one who represented the mind of the Liberal Party in its most energetic and cultivated form. The words to which I desire to call attention are these—

> "The American Institutions have imprinted strongly on the American mind, that any one man (with a white skin) is as good as any other; and it is felt that this false creed is nearly connected with some of the more unfavourable points in American character. It is not a small mischief that the Constitution of any country should sanction this creed; for the belief in it, whether express or tacit, is almost as detrimental to moral and intellectual excellence as any effect which most forms of Government can produce."

Let me read another passage—

> "A person may have a double vote by other means than that of tendering two votes at the same hustings; he may have a vote in each of two different constituencies; and though this exceptional privilege at present belongs rather to superiority of means than of intelligence, I would not abolish it where it exists, since until a truer test of education is adopted, it would be unwise to dispense with even so imperfect a one as is afforded by pecuniary circumstances."

["Hear, hear!"] Then the suggestion was made that the future might have in it a larger extension of education, and that the need for this might presently disappear, and he added this, which I commend to the hon. Member who cheers—

> "But if the best hopes which can be formed on this subject were certainties, I should still contend for the principle of plural voting."

I said it was not long ago since Mr. John Stuart Mill, who never recanted these opinions, wrote the words which I have read. Now, I want to ask, why is it that the Government are taking an entirely different view, and why is it that, exactly at the time when democratic finance is tending to pile all the burdens of the country upon those who are in the position which gives them the power of plural voting, that power of plural voting should be taken away? We know that it is because the education and intelligence of the country is against the present Government. They know that, broadly, what were called, with some attempt at opprobrium, the classes—they know that the classes were against and are against the main elements in their policy at the present time, and it is because this body of voters is believed to be against them that they desire now to disfranchise them. Well, Sir, it is a strange thing that this should be done. It is not so very long that this body of plural voting has been adverse to the Party opposite. I believe that down even as late as 1885 there was a real and substantial division of opinion in the voters of whom we are now speaking, and the Liberal Party has had, in times gone by—and I do not see why it should not have again—the support of a very large share of the intelligence and the wealth of this country. [*Ministerial laughter.*] I am more hopeful for the Government than they are for themselves. This body of educated opinion has turned almost unanimously against them, and they want to disfranchise them. I encourage them to be more hopeful. Let them look forward to better times, when the policy which they adopt and propose to the House can commend itself to those who are interested as deeply as this class are in the affairs of the country. It will be a mistake to disfranchise a class. Surely it would be better, gradually, at all events, to try and convert them. But if it is necessary for their present political purpose to crowd the Register—as indeed some of the provisions of this Bill would crowd them—with numbers of the less independent and less intelligent voters, and if it be necessary for their purpose that they should erase from the Register this body of intelligent opinion, I suggest to the Government, that while they are trying to get rid of what I believe to be the just and fair influence of wealth and education, which is indicated to a large extent by the wealth of the country, they should take care not to give to wealth, and the illegitimate operations of wealth, a very enormous power in the electoral system of the country; and the proposal which they make with regard to plural voting appears to me to be as mischievous as a proposal could possibly be. Just let me ask what the result of it would be. I have pointed out the great increase in expense that would follow from duplicating registration and revision, and from increasing the burden upon candidates; but let me ask the House to consider what will be the real and practical effect of the scheme for the abolition of plural voting which the Government have introduced. They do not propose to take away the votes or the right to be registered in respect of different qualifications, but they do propose, while they allow a man to be registered in two or three or half a dozen places, to say to him, "You shall vote for only one of these constituencies at one election." What will be the result? It will throw an enormous power, not at present enjoyed to any extent at all, into the hands of the permanent political organisations of the country. Take the position of a man who has two or three votes. Take my own position. I have three votes. The right hon. Gentleman is dealing in this matter with a mass of votes far larger than that to which he has at any time referred. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, in one or two of his answers to questions upon this matter, has spoken as if the ownership vote was the only vote with which he had to deal, and as if the 500,000 ownership voters who stand upon the Register in this country in respect to ownership qualification were the only persons who would be affected. It is impossible to say how many will be affected; but it is certain that that figure of 500,000 by no means represents, or nearly represents, the number that will be affected. It is not the ownership vote, it is the occupation vote that is affected. Every Borough Member knows, with régard to his own constituents, that there are hundreds of voters who have an occupation vote in the borough by reason of the business they carry on there, and have an occupation vote in the county by reason of their residence in that county. I can see no conceivable reason for disfranchising these men—for not allowing them to have their votes. The man who is carrying on business in a town is interested in the affairs of the town, is qualified to judge with regard to them, and is surely entitled to have some voice in the selection of the Member who in this House represents the town. Nor can it be said he is less closely interested in the affairs of the place in which he lives and from which another Member is to be sent; and you propose to disfranchise him by restricting him, and restricting him only to the one vote wherever he may choose to place it. I have heard it said this is not a disfranchising proposal, and that there is no disfranchisement in this Bill. In the year 1859 a Reform Bill was proposed by a Conservative Government, and that Conservative Government was practically turned out of Office through a proposal in that Bill, upon an Amendment which was moved from the other side. This proposal was that a freehold voter should vote not in the county, but in the borough in which the freehold was situated. It was pointed out by Lord John Russell and by Mr. Bright that the effect of that would be that where he had a vote for a county, and also had an occupation vote in a borough, he would lose one of those votes, and the House of Commons rang with the denunciation of disfranchisement which came from Lord John Russell and Mr. Bright, because he was not allowed still to retain his two votes. And here it is denied there is disfranchisement when you absolutely cut off the man in the position I have suggested, from giving a vote except in but one of the places for which he might be qualified to vote. Consider what the result will be. You will establish a class of voters—a sort of floating class of voters—who do not until the actual day of election make up their minds where their political influence is to be exercised. What would be the inevitable result? Suppose I had two or three votes—and there is nothing of the kind existing at the present time—what would happen? Take my two votes, I have my vote for London in respect of the house in which I live, and I have a vote for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex, for the house where I live in the country. At the present time I have the right to vote for the Holborn Division of London, and also for the Uxbridge Division of Middlesex. But suppose this law were passed, and I was told I must only vote for one and not for both places, as a Party man I should desire to take the advice and instruction of someone who knew what the electoral needs of these constituencies were. If Holborn was the place in danger—which by-the-bye it is not likely to be—or if the Uxbridge Division was in danger—which it is not likely to be — if one of those places was in danger, but in the other we had an overwhelming majority, of course I should get a line from the Central Office asking me to record my vote for the place where it would be of most value; and it would be given there. The result of this proposal, therefore, would be that you would throw into the hands of the chiefs of the political organisations of the two Parties the power of directing the political forces upon these different constituencies on the day of polling, and not till then, in a way which would defeat the calculations of many of those who were engaged in political contests, and would cause what the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy talks about, in his most interesting book on America—namely, it would make the "boss" of the political machine the person who really would have the electoral authority in his hands. Of all the proposals to come from a Liberal Government is not this the strangest? In the name of the purity of registration and the purity of election, they are putting before the House of Commons a Bill which would have the effect of largely increasing the public burdens, largely increasing the burdens upon numbers of candidates, and thereby excluding from any hope of political life men who have no means, men who are not willing to become the mere tools of a Party organisation on one side or the other, and setting up such a system with respect to actual voting at the election as would make us far more than ever we have been, and far more I hope than we ever shall be, the tools and the instruments of political organisations. Now, Sir, I fear I have not left myself long to deal with the other proposition to which I have to address myself. I hope the House will feel that that which I have pointed out to them as being so defective and directly mischievous in this Bill strengthens very much the proposition I ask them to accept. You might have accepted some honest and straightforward registration reform Bill, and you might have not refused to accept practical and immediate reforms, simply because other things were left untouched; but when you are dealing with proposals like these, what conceivable excuse is there for doing what the Government propose—namely, in order to redress what I deny to be an anomaly, but what they allege to be an electoral inequality, to set up a system having results so mischievous and far-reaching as these, and to leave absolutely untouched the great and cardinal inequality which affects not the decision of a constituency, but the decision of this House itself? What is the object of the Government? They desire, I presume, or it is suggested they desire, to get such a system as may make this House the true, accurate representative of the opinions of the people of the Three Kingdoms. If that is their object—I do not think they are sure about their object, for they do not cheer that, but it ought to be their object. I withdraw any expression of belief that it is, but if that were their object, what would they begin with? Why, Sir, there is one obvious and clear anomaly—great, staring us in the face, and confessed by all, affecting not only the distribution of Parties in this House, but actually affecting the tenure of that (the Treasury) Bench at the present moment, and that is the anomaly which gives us in this House, as representing Ireland, 23 more Members than Ireland ought of right to have. This is not a question which needs argument. The figures have been examined long ago, and their result cannot be disputed. And more than that, I said at the beginning of my speech that the anomaly I was going to point out was a great anomaly which was to be left unredressed and which was to have the tolerance of Parliament by being allowed to continue, and was one which not only could not be denied, but had been admitted by the Government, and for which they themselves had proposed a remedy. Why, Sir, they have gone through the labour which is required for redressing the grievance. Last year, in their Home Rule Bill, they proposed to reduce the number of Members in this House coming from Ireland to 80, and they actually undertook and performed the labour of providing a new Reform Bill for Ireland, specifying the constituencies by which these 80 Irish Members were to be elected. So that we have the grievance obvious, glaring, admitted; we have the remedy suggested—provided indeed—by the Government themselves, but why will not they apply it? Why do they pretend that they are redressing and amending the Registration Law by bringing in a Bill which will have manifold additional dangers, which leaves the obvious difficulties and mischiefs of Registration Law absolutely untouched and unredressed, and which has the far-reaching results that I have indicated? I think we see what the reason is. They are prepared to disregard their declarations, and to discard even the Bills they have submitted to Parliament. They are prepared to make alterations in our Registration Law which go directly against all the declarations of principle they have made, and all the expressions of desire they have given to us as to what election laws should be; and they do this, we know, because they dare not touch the great mischief and evil which all confess, because really they are dependent upon and they must tolerate that great anomaly, because it is by the aid and under the shelter of that anomaly they still continue to hold the place of which I think the constituencies would be delighted to relieve them. I have the honour to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"This House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power."—(*Sir E. Clarke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, the two parts of the very able speech of the hon. and learned Member were of a very different character. The first part was a most clear, most interesting, and destructive criticism of many of the details of this Bill, which would be open to their consideration in Committee; but the second part, which was intended to defend the Resolution the hon. and learned Member had placed upon the Paper, was less full, and, if he might say so, was less convincing even to the hon. Gentleman's friends than was the first part. In the former portion of his speech the hon. and learned Member spoke of last year's Bill in terms of appreciative regard which might have improved the fortunes of that Bill had they been made upon the Motion for its introduction. The Motion made upon last year's Bill was the subject of a very able and elaborate speech by the Leader of the Opposition, and that speech sealed the fate of the Bill, because it absolutely condemned the principal proposal which that Bill made and upon which all the other proposals rested. The hon. and learned Member had specially put before the House the case of the lodgers, and had asked the House to reinstate in the present measure the proposals that were made last year for the special and exceptional treatment of lodgers as compared with their present treatment. The objections raised last year would, no doubt, be again considered this year, one of those objections being that the lodger franchise had become very largely a fraudulent franchise, and that it was undesirable to give further facilities for the registration of lodgers outside the existing law. The lodger was a highly technical voter. His right to the franchise depended, not only on the payment of a sum of money which differentiated him from the occupier, but also on the position of separateness of occupation of particular rooms, which was not required in the case of other voters. That separateness of occupation made the lodger franchise one which had been differentiated as against the political Party to which they (the Liberals) belonged, and which was also exposed to very great dangers and risks of fraud. He had received from the Overseers of one of the largest civil parishes in this country the whole of the lodger claims on both sides made at the last registration of voters. He did not know which were the Liberal and which the Conservative claims, but he should be glad to show the whole of them to any hon. Members interested in the subject, and he thought they would agree with him—and he had the Register showing these people had succeeded—that these claims were fraudulent from one end to the other. With much that had fallen from the hon. and learned Member in certain parts of his speech he was prepared entirely to agree. He would, however, point out that the very matter which the hon. and learned Member put forward as the instance of the greatest hardship which he could give to the House—namely, the case he quoted in which the hon. and learned Member for Louth had appeared — that that grievance had been dealt with and fully met by Bills which, in four successive years, were brought forward by the Liberal and opposed by the Conservative Party in this House, and, finally, when they passed this House and went to the House of Lords, were rejected in the latter House on the Motion of Lord Cairns himself. That instance the hon. and learned Member gave—the lodger instance—was dealt with by a Committee over which the Chancellor of the Exchequer presided; it was dealt with in the Bills which for four years in succession endeavoured to carry out the Report of that Committee, and which were sent to the House of Lords and rejected by the Conservative Party in that House. The hon. and learned Member alluded to the Committee whose Report he had quoted as being the last Committee which investigated the matter; and although the matter was not one of importance, he ventured to say there had been a subsequent Committee, and it was only courteous that he should now say what he meant by his interruption. There was a large Committee of 23 Members in 1878 to which three Registration Bills, introduced by private Members, were committed. That Committee, composed of those most skilled in the question, combined these three Bills into one joint Bill of between 70 and 80 clauses; it passed through both Houses of Parliament, and became the Registration Act of 1878. The hon. and learned Member had spoken of the whole question of registration from almost a Radical point of view, which contrasted very strangely with what he ventured to call the rank Toryism of the latter portion of the speech. But while the hon. Member might be a Tory on the franchise, he certainly, as regarded registration, might claim that he was Radical. The conclusion of the hon. and learned Member was a very weak one. Although the hon. Member gave some favour to the Bill of last year, yet he was unable to allude very definitely to that Bill as a Bill he would favour because its main feature was the creation of a public registration officer to be appointed by the county, and that proposal was absolutely condemned by the Leader of the Opposition in a most powerful speech in which he destroyed that main proposal of the Bill of last year. What was the proposal the hon. and learned Member made? It was the final resort of all embarrassed and baffled politicians—a Select Committee. He wanted them to see that they were so hampered by existing legislation that it was desirable not so much to pass a Bill as to appoint a Committee to consider on what principles a Bill should proceed. The main point of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was that this Bill contained provisions effecting changes in the representative system of the country so important that they ought to be accompanied by other changes still more important. The changes were twofold changes, and the hon. and learned Gentleman had alluded to both in detail. He had referred to the changes which affected the period of qualification of electors, and changes which affected the principle of One Man One Vote, which were intended to prevent people voting in respect of more than one qualification at the General Election. As to the period, he (Sir C. Dilke) was glad to hear the hon. and learned Member admit that the period of qualification was very long. He had feared they would hear from the hon. and learned Gentleman what they had heard from Members sitting near him—namely, an indication that in his view six months instead of three months would be the right period. However, nothing of the kind fell from him, and he (Sir C. Dilke) was glad of it. But it was not the period of qualification that was most important, but the period which followed before a man actually got upon the Register, and the further period which elapsed before he actually exercised the vote. In his (Sir C. Dilke's) own opinion, the period in the Bill was vastly too long, greatly as it reduced the present period. Under the Bill it would be nine months and one-third at the shortest before a man could get on the Register. A man who claimed a vote on the 25th of March would not get on the Register of electors, let alone find himself able to vote, till the 1st of July next year—a period of 15 1-3 months. That was vastly too long, and he was glad the hon. and learned Gentleman, in his somewhat destructive criticism of some portions of the Bill, had not ventured to assert that the period proposed in the Bill was too short. They had actually lengthened the period of qualification as regarded the whole of the Local Government electors of the country except the Municipal Corporation electors and the county electors in the course of the present year. The hon. and learned Member had expressed his preference—if it could be accomplished, though, of course, he saw the difficulty of dealing with the matter—for the period running to the time of voting rather than to the time of the completion of the Register. This year they had abolished the system which previously existed for every Local Board election, Board of Guardians election, and for every Metropolitan Vestry election and at every Vestry poll. They had done away with the system the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to recommend, and had substituted a longer period of qualification simply because of the impossibility in which the House found itself of making the Register without some means of testing and supervising it before responsible officers and Registrars. It would be 21 1-3 months before some unfortunate people could vote who were now able to vote at the end of 12 months. He was afraid, however, that these difficulties were inevitable. All they could say was, make the period of qualification and of making up the Register as short as possible. To his mind, there was no reason for a period of qualification for the Imperial vote. What they wanted to know was that the man was there for the purposes of the Register. The months which were taken to prepare the Register were sufficient for that purpose. No qualification before the date on which they began to compile their Register ought to be needed for the purposes of the Imperial vote. He now came to the main point of the hon. and learned Member's criticism. The hon. and learned Member objected, above all, to the provisions of the Bill, both as regarded the elections on one day, and also as regarded repeated voting by persons possessing more than one qualification—to the principle which was sometimes called "One Man One Vote." His own criticism of the plan of the Bill would be somewhat in the opposite direction from that of the hon. and learned Member; and so far from objecting to people not having two qualifications at a General Election, he did not see why a man should be allowed to vote twice at bye-elections. It was very hard if a gentleman on the Treasury Bench had a majority at the General Election, and then had, when seeking re-election after appointment to office, to submit himself to a different set of constituents, out-voters from all parts of the country being brought to turn him out. He confessed that if that principle were good in the one case it was good in the other, but that was a point with which they might easily deal in Committee. It was idle to deny that the Bill as it stood would involve in a great number of constituencies expense both in the double registration and in the inquiries which would be necessary to prevent double voting by persons registered in separate constituencies. On the other hand, there was the set-off that that expense, unlike the expense thrown upon constituencies, was not absolutely a necessary expense, because those who had enthusiasm at their back, and represented working-class constituencies which were swept by waves of strong public feeling, were able to do this work without expense. ["No, no!"] His right hon. Friend behind him (Sir H. James) doubted that. He would ask that right hon. Member to consider the case of Battersea, where the whole of the work at the last Election was done by the voluntary labour of the working people. The right hon. Gentleman would remember the powerful speech he made when he introduced his last Bill on the subject of election expenses—he would remember, perhaps, declaring that the tendency was to replace paid labour by voluntary labour. There was another plan for accomplishing the end of "One Man One Vote"—namely, an extension of the plan of the hon. Member for East Norfolk, alluded to on the introduction of the Bill by the Chief Secretary for Ireland—the plan of making ownership voters claim every year, accompanying the claim with a declaration that they were not at present registered elsewhere, nor claiming to be registered elsewhere, which might be adopted as an alternative to plan of the Government. Other plans to accomplish the end in view might be discussed in Committee, but the main point was the principle, and he was surprised to hear the hon. and learned Member, who was not generally considered a retrograde, but rather an advanced Member of the Conservative Party, express uncompromising adherence to the principle of one man several votes. The hon. and learned Member had not maintained the principle which he ought to have maintained as the foundation of his Amendment. He suggested, though he did not prove, that the changes in the direction of "One Man One Vote" ought to be accompanied or immediately followed by a proposal for the redistribution of seats. The hon. and learned Member asserted it, but he did not prove that there was anything in the proposition bearing directly on that. He did not prove that they must previously or simultaneously redistribute seats in Parliament, or that "One Man One Vote," even if adopted in the fullest degree, would worsen the anomalies of which he spoke or render them graver than they were at present. Imitation was supposed to be the sincerest flattery. Well, in his Amendment the hon. and learned Member had adopted the terms of a proposal originally submitted by Radical Members of the House annually from 1874 to 1880. Year after year the Conservative Party voted against the extension of the franchise, and also against a redistribution of seats; but now the hon. and learned Member said there was such a mischief in the glaring inequalities which pervaded our electoral system that they needed immediate attention. These glaring inequalities would not be increased, but rather diminished, by the principle of "One Man One Vote"; but they would not be greater under this Bill than they were as the result of the settlement arrived at in 1884 and 1885. It might have been wiser to go further than was done in those years. As a party to that settlement he (Sir C. Dilke) had expressed his view in favour of going much further. He believed the noble Lord the Member for Paddington and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, as well as himself, expressed the opinion that they might have gone further.

*LORD R. CHURCHILL was understood to say that the average constituencies in England were under 10,000. Only in one point had he desired to go further. He thought the two-Member boroughs were the great blot upon the redistribution scheme.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he understood that the noble Lord was willing to go further; but the point was not one of importance. Both Parties, in their wisdom, agreed to a particular scheme, and the anomalies which the hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken of as so glaringly mischievous were virtually the same as those which existed then. The hon. and learned Member had defended as a principle the anomaly of one man several votes. Surely when the House of Lords, as they often did, appealed to the opinion of the country on a particular measure, they did not wish to get the opinion of one person several times over. On these occasions it was always said, "We will get the opinions of the electors," not "We will get the opinion of some electors a dozen or 20 times over." He looked upon the part of the hon. and learned Member's speech which dealt with that point as rank Toryism, and doubtless when he came to see his words in print in *The Times* to-morrow he would regret those observations. It was unfortunate that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have supported himself by a quotation from Mr. Mill, which he said Mr. Mill had never repudiated. The book referred to was written many years before the year which had been suggested—1866, and all who knew Mr. Mill in the years which followed the writing of that book must be aware that he greatly changed the view which he had held in favour of giving several votes to one man. A common case of the plural voter was of a man who had a vote for a University, another for a town house, another for his country seat, and others for freeholds which his forefathers had acquired in times past for the purpose of manufacturing faggot votes. No doubt there were flagrant cases in which even in our own times noble Lords and country gentlemen had acquired small freeholds for the sake of the votes they conferred. The question was whether that was a desirable way of indirectly representing intelligence. In the country, certainly, property often did not represent intelligence, and, on the other hand, he knew a good many cases of persons of intelligence, well qualified to take a share in the representative institutions of their country, who had no votes at the present time. Those who sat in that part of the House would not be content until the right to the franchise was removed from the real or technical possession of property or occupation of buildings, and placed upon the personal consideration of fitness. And he believed that many hon. Members opposite, judging from the speeches they had made outside, were willing to go further than the hon. and learned Member and concede the principle of "One Man One Vote" if they could get with it a large redistribution of seats. He had no doubt opinions of that kind would be expressed in the course of this Debate, if not by hon. Gentlemen opposite, at any rate by hon. Members on the Unionist Benches behind him. They were very prevalent opinions amongst Members of the Opposition. The root idea which was at the bottom of this proposal received no colour from the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Member said that 500,000 ownership voters would be affected by the adoption of the principle of "One Man One Vote." There were no statistics which would make that matter clear, but he was sure that the figure was not so large. Each Member of the House who knew his own Register pretty well could go through it for himself. He could look at the ownership voters and form his own estimate. The conditions differed infinitely in different constituencies, but his belief was that only one-fifth to one-tenth of the ownership voters would be affected by the "One Man One Vote" provision. That argument on this question was a two-edged argument. It cut both ways. It meant that the grievance felt on the Liberal side of the House at the existence of this class of voters was to some extent an exaggerated grievance, but, on the other hand, it destroyed the argument on which the attack on the "One Man One Vote" provision was based, because he was convinced that the number of non-resident voters who disturbed the local balance of the constituencies in cases where the majority one way or the other was not large was smaller than hon. Gentlemen opposite supposed. There was a Return in regard to Scotland, but none with regard to England or Ireland, and the Scotch figures went far to confirm his view. The number of ownership voters who would be affected by the One Man One Vote provision was much smaller in Ireland than in Scotland or England. To suggest that there were anything like 500,000 persons in the whole of the United Kingdom who would be affected by this provision was to make a monstrous exaggeration. The so-called ownership lists did not contain freeholders only, but five different classes of voters—not only ownership voters, but copyholders and leaseholders of over 20 years—and the vast majority of these leaseholders were persons who resided in the places where their property was situate. In Scotland there were 50,000 ownership voters, and of these only 10,000 odd did reside on their properties. Therefore, in Scotland one-fifth, and in his constituency one-tenth, of the voters would be affected by the provision. The hon. and learned Member and his friends had accused the Government of having specially prepared this Bill for the benefit of their own Party in the State. It was suggested in the House, and much more markedly outside, that the unfair arrangement or manipulation of the electoral system upon which the Government had embarked was to be redressed by some form of redistribution of seats that would correct the anomalies which were keeping the Party opposite out of their rights at the present moment, and which, if set right, would bring them again into the possession of power. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not dealt with the matter at length. He had dealt with the case of Ireland, but did not even suggest the case of Wales. The Government did make proposals for the reduction of the Irish Members, and those proposals would undoubtedly be made to the House again in connection with any scheme for the devolution of Irish affairs to any local Irish Assembly, but when they were asked to deal with Ireland on a redistribution of seats they would not be asked to deal with Ireland alone. The suggestion was that there was something to be done in the way of redistribution—that the distribution of seats was to be put upon a different basis, so as to restore the balance of power to the advantage of the Conservative Party. That was what he understood the argument to be. There were, of course, a great many Members on his side of the House who were in favour of a much nearer approximation to electoral equality than existed at present, and they would all support a further redistribution of seats at the right opportunity. The anomalies which existed before 1885 were, of course, overwhelming as compared with the anomalies existing now. The anomalies in respect to county divisions were small; it was in the boroughs that they were heaviest. The redress of these disproportions he, for one, would very heartily welcome. Whenever the time came that the Conservative Party were inclined to approach redistribution in a business-like way, he should, as the Americans said, be ready to make a deal. There were many Members who sat on that side of the House who would give the Conservative Party their support, and he was sure, when they were prepared with a scheme, they had only to show it to them, and if it was a reasonable one, it would very soon be forced on the Government. The Conservative Party were very much mistaken, however, if they thought that redistribution on the lines of equal electoral districts would benefit them from a Party point of view. Whether it was a question of one vote one value or of equal electoral districts, in neither case would it benefit the Conservative Party. When the last redistribution scheme was under consideration, the desire of the Conservative Party was that the Boundary Commissioners should divide the districts so as to distinguish as clearly as possible between the urban districts and the rural districts. They insisted upon that, and it was carried out. Of course, nothing like equal electoral districts or one vote one value could be arrived at while this distinction was made between the urban and rural parts of the country. The sole reason why there were anomalies between county and county, and the sole reason why county anomalies continued after 1884-85, and existed now, was because it was thought undesirable by anybody to break up the old county boundaries—and undoubtedly if a scheme were adopted which could only be brought into operation by getting rid of the old boundaries it would meet with a large amount of local unpopularity, and a Bill founded upon it would be wrecked. With regard to the boroughs, the House dealt very tenderly with them in 1885. He himself would have gone further, and he knew that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) would have gone further, and he believed that if at any time the Conservatives made up their mind that redistribution was necessary, with a view to a nearer approximation to the system of equal electoral areas, they would be able to get their way with the support of a number of Members on that side of the House. At the same time, he warned the Conservative Party once more that they would get no Party gain. If they were to have a nearer approach to equal electoral districts, or one vote one value, it was quite clear that they must abolish the University seats. It was impossible under a system of one vote one value to retain the nine University seats, the Members for which were at present elected by the exercise of the double vote. He would come now to the question of the boroughs. If they took the small boroughs in which there were say under 4,000 electors, or 20,000 population, they would find that the majority of the seats were held by Conservative Members, and although he admitted, for the sake of argument, that it was possible that Metropolitan seats and other large seats which might obtain additional Members under this scheme, might be held by a majority of Conservatives—(but here they were in the region of hypothesis)—still, taking the most favourable aspect of the question as applying to hon. Members opposite, he was sure they would discover that they would gain nothing under this plan—certainly nothing that would compensate for the loss of the nine

University seats. He feared that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth would have to sacrifice himself under an arrangement of this kind. Cardiff, which was persistently putting forward a claim for larger representation, had three times the number of votes that one Member for Plymouth represented, and it would take the two Members for Plymouth and a third Member to make up the number represented by a single Member for Cardiff. He ventured to say that the Bill now before the House would not intensify the existing anomalies, but, so far as it affected them at all, tended in some small degree to redress them. With regard to the double voters, they were not mainly in the small boroughs, nor did they exist in such large proportions in the boroughs as in the county divisions, which in the suburbs of the great towns were very rapidly increasing. Take the suburbs round London — Tottenham, Ealing, Hornsey, or Wimbledon. In these cases they would find that if they took away, not one-tenth or one-fifth of the ownership voters, but everyone of them, so rapidly had these constituencies increased since the re-distribution scheme of 1885 that they would still be up to the average limit in point of numbers of voters. The case of Wimbledon was a very strong one. At Wimbledon they found the largest number of ownership voters existing in any constituency in the United Kingdom—between 7,000 and 8,000—but so rapidly had that division increased since it was purposely put at a low figure in the scheme of 1884-85, that if they took away, not a proportion, but the whole of these voters, numbering between 7,000 and 8,000, it would still have 10,000 occupation voters left. So far as they could judge, this class of voters would be taken from the divisions which could well afford to spare them, and, therefore, when the statistics of the voting under this Bill came to be published, he believed it would be found the House, in passing it, had done something to reduce rather than to increase the electoral anomalies he had described. It was impossible to ascertain what the facts were in reference to the boroughs, but he thought he had said enough to prove that it was impossible to base any redistribution scheme in advance upon the principle of "One Man One Vote." When the time came for redistribution he had no doubt that the new opinion now held on the Conservative side of the House would prevail with that Party in the State; that they would reverse the opinion they formed in 1884 that the right policy was to separate the urban from the rural portion of the counties, and adopt the view that in order to approximate the electoral system more nearly to the old Chartist principle of equal electoral districts there must be a certain measure of fusion of the borough and the county. The Conservative Party would undoubtedly receive support from a great many Radicals if it frankly adopted that view, but it would have to take its punishment in the form of the loss of the University seats, and it must make up its mind also to the sacrifice of a number of the smaller boroughs, the majority of which were now held by its adherents. There was, however, this advantage, that whatever might be said in public they all admitted that the small boroughs, despite the efforts of his right hon. Friend behind him (Sir H. James) were still corrupt, whereas there could be no doubt that the great borough and county constituencies to which extra Members would be given were universally pure. That consideration, besides all the others which went in favour of further redistribution, would help them in arriving at a conclusion when a scheme was authoritatively put forward, as it could not be put forward in reference to this Bill. The case of Ireland had been made a stalking-horse of by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. It was an unfortunate instance to point to in supporting his contention for further consideration. The Conservative Party in 1885 did not propose any reduction in the representation of Ireland.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: That was because 103 Members for Ireland was an Article of the Act of Union.

*Sir C. W. DILKE (continuing) said, he believed the noble Lord was wrong as to the exact figure, but at all events when the matter came to be debated in that House not much stress was laid upon the Act of Union. The matter was discussed upon its merits, and 132 Members voted in the majority for the Bill as it stood and 25 against. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth suggested that Ireland was greatly over-represented, and no doubt if they took the population into account it was over-represented; and there were other parts of the Kingdom that were over-represented, such as Wales and the Highlands, and the Eastern and South West counties of England. Undoubtedly, whatever scale they took of enfranchisement or disfranchisement, or whatever scale of borough and county representation was adopted, some portions of the United Kingdom must always be over-represented and other portions under-represented. The only way of avoiding some measure of local over-representation or under-representation must be to adopt the principle of equal electoral districts on the old Chartist system without respect to boundary. In 1884 that system was not followed, but the old plan was pursued, and the only objection the Conservatives put forward was that in the case of Ireland three seats ought to be taken away, so reducing the representation from 103 to 100 Members. But curiously enough the application of the scale adopted would have had the effect in the case of Ireland of taking away the two University seats and one other seat at the time held by a Conservative Member. When the Conservative Party faced that fact they very promptly dropped their scheme for the reduction of the Irish Members. As he had said, he was ready himself to go further, and he hoped that they would soon go further. What he had sought to prove was that there was no reason for making this Bill—which, after all, was not a particularly large one—the ground for insisting upon going further at the present time, which, of course, speaking to the House as a body of sensible men, meant the wrecking of this measure entirely. They knew that a Bill for the redistribution of seats could not be carried within the limits of the present Parliament. It could, however, be carried in a future Parliament if the House would give enough time to it; but even if they settled upon a plan of the sort, unless they were agreed to chop up the counties into equal districts, and to chop them up again after every Census, they would find these anomalies existing again just as they existed at present. In 1884 the counties were so arranged by the Boundary Commission as to make the divisions as equal as possible, yet already there was a considerable disproportion in several of the constituencies. These disproportions would arise again after any distribution on the present lines, and if they wished to enter upon a scheme which would not be only complete in itself, but which would last for all time, they must adopt the Colonial or Continental practice of a self-acting scheme which would automatically redistribute all the seats. That was a great change from which he believed the Conservative Party would shrink, but it was not a change that would frighten the Radical Party in the House, and if a Conservative Government was at any time prepared to bring it forward they might be sure of obtaining a considerable amount of support from those Benches.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) said, he must ask why, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean admitted the anomaly of over-representation, especially in the case of Ireland, and urged that the only remedy for it was equal electoral districts, the Government did not propose to establish such districts in the Bill rather than deal with the smaller and less important defects in our electoral system? If the Bill had dealt with that great anomaly, and had sought to bring about more equality of representation, he believed very many Members on that side of the House would have been equally ready with Members on the opposite Benches to see that a very great reform bringing about equality of elections was established, in order that Members might be returned to that House by an equal vote. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken particularly of the districts which surrounded the large towns, but he had only quoted the instances of the constituencies in the neighbourhood of London. As representing a constituency to which this Bill, if passed, would have a serious application—a district which formed a suburb of Manchester—he desired to say something on behalf of those of his constituents who resided in the neighbourhood of Manchester and Liverpool both upon this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had laughed at the idea of one man having two votes. He had taken the case of the publican with many votes, and of the gentleman who inherited his votes from his father, but in the case of those votes which were the votes of the tradesmen of great towns, it could at least be said that the owners of them were entitled to exercise them upon their own merits, and because of the position which they had made for themselves by their industrial enterprise. The votes of which he was speaking were those of men who had raised themselves in life by their capacity and energy, and who took an equal interest in the town and county with which they were connected. The right hon. Gentleman had said, and he (Mr. Disraeli) thought had rightly said, that it was wrong to draw the line too closely between the urban and the rural districts; but in a case like this, where there was an urban population planted in a rural district, it was impossible that they should disfranchise these men for living seven or eight miles from their business places without showing very good cause indeed. They were not told whether under this Bill a man was to have his choice as to where he should vote—whether he was to vote in the place where he slept or in the place where he worked. Of course, if a man was a City Father, he would naturally vote in the city or town wherein his position had been made and where his business lay, but in addition to that he might have acquired the interest of a landowner in the suburbs, which was an entirely different kind of representation; but under this Bill his position in that respect was to go for nothing, and his influence as a voter in the rural constituency would be null and void. He ventured to think that the case of a man in that position ought to be considered in any Bill which was to purify elections. If the Government, in dealing with a great reform like this, was going to niggle with the small corners of the existing anomalies without touching the great anomalies, he thought the less that was seen of this Bill in the House the better. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had thrown some doubts upon the purity of the lodger franchise. He quite agreed with that, and believed it was due, not so much to the claims made, but to the action of the Revising Barristers. The decisions of the Barristers had been utterly at variance in different localities. In one division it was difficult to get a lodger on the list, and in another it was easy to do so, and this, of course, led to many anomalies. In London he believed the lodger franchise was in a very unsatisfactory condition. Why did not the Government deal with this question in their Bill, and prevent the Revising Barrister being the sole arbiter as to whether a man should be placed on the lodger franchise or not? To remedy this defect would be a much greater reform than the abolition of the plural vote. As to the proposal to hold all the elections on the same day, he thought the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill hardly appreciated the difficulties that would attend such an arrangement, especially in the counties, in relation to the staff and machinery necessary to carry it out. He believed those difficulties would be found to be greater than had been anticipated, particularly in regard to police protection at elections in the counties. Then as to Saturday as the particular day for the elections, that might be a convenient day for the people of London and for many of the working men in towns, but for the country constituencies, and especially for market towns in the country, it would be a most inconvenient day. It would greatly interfere with business, and the excitement of the election would be carried over to the Sunday. With regard to registration, as the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had wisely said, the great question was one of expense. He knew very well, and every one knew, that the money for registration would have to come out of the pocket of the candidate or his supporters, and that if registration was done at all well it was, and must be, expensive. Volunteer canvassers never produced such successful results as paid agents. ["Oh!"] Well, experience showed that that was the case. If two Registers, as now proposed, had really to be made, it was obvious that the expenses of registration would be doubled throughout the country. It would also often be a matter of needless inconvenience to a voter who was uncertain as to his right to vote and would have to assure himself that his name was on both lists. He would have to attend the registration twice a year, and in many cases lose two days' work. If the Registers were compiled at different seasons of the year this trouble would be still further aggravated. He submitted that the present system for the inspection of the Registers was bad, and would suggest that they should be kept in charge of an official, who would always attend at his particular office on certain days all the year round, in the same way as the Register of Births, Marriages, and Deaths was now managed. He would further suggest that if a man could prove that he had been in occupation 12 months on bringing up two householders as sureties, he should have his name put upon the Register. This seemed to him a better proposal than that of the Bill, and he would recommend the right hon. Gentleman opposite to consider it. Then, there was the point which had been called the only argument the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth had put forward—and it was the strongest argument of all against doing away with the plural vote—namely, the 23 Members from Ireland in excess of the number she should have. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had said that there were inequalities in other parts of the United Kingdom which would have to be dealt with if the Irish representation were altered. He did not see why they should touch a small reform like that they were proposing when they knew that before very long they would be face to face with the necessity for a Redistribution Bill. He thought it would be an excellent opportunity for Her Majesty's Government to terminate their existence and go out on a Redistribution Bill. That would be doing the country a lasting good. He was not inclined to traverse very severely the objection that had been so strongly urged by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, that rich men and publicans should be no longer allowed a plurality of votes for the same constituency. But he held that by proposing to do away with plural voting they were doing great injustice to a large class of people whom he represented. He contended that a man who had a large house in one county and perhaps large business offices in another five or six miles away was perfectly entitled to vote under the double occupation.

*MR. H. L. W. LAWSON (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, the House would have seen from the very ingenious though somewhat inconsistent speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth that a change had come over the spirit of the Opposition since the Bill was first introduced. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said that it was in many respects a great improvement upon the Bill of last year, and now a charge was made against it that it was an attempt for the pettiest Party purposes to gerrymander the political system of the country. He (Mr. Lawson) had very great doubts as to the Party gains that would be made out of any reform of this kind. In the past political prophecies and calculations had generally proved very futile, and any reasoning based upon them had almost invariably been falsified. It was not from any motives of the kind suggested that Liberals on that side of the House advocated the abolition of plural voting, but solely as part of the principles of their political creed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir H. James) spoke of 500,000 voters depending upon the ownership qualification for their franchise, but he had not shown upon what he based his calculation as to the number of those who had this ownership qualification without residence. Knowing that the owners were usually occupiers too, he thought his estimate a gross exaggeration. Even if the proposal of the Government had an immediate effect, it could not have any prolonged effect. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth had said that Members and candidates would fall into the hands of political organisations if this Bill were passed into law. He (Mr. Lawson) had, unfortunately, had sufficient experience of elections to know that political machinery was already in such a high state of perfection that nothing could increase the influence of those who worked it. What he did anticipate was that in future political agents would see where the votes of those who had a plural suffrage could be exercised most satisfactorily. In constituencies such as he represented it was the case that at election times a great number of men who had no interest in or connection with the county came in, and, although they did not absolutely swamp the resident electors, exercised an influence to which the resident electors thought they had no claim. Although he did not anticipate any great Party advantage from a re-adjustment of the political machinery, he believed that it would remove a rankling sense of injustice which lurked in the breasts of a great number of the working classes. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had said that what was required was a scheme of redistribution to accompany the Registration Bill; but the Opposition would agree that the Ministry had a sufficient programme for the Session without this new load. He was wholly with the hon. and learned Gentleman in most of the arguments which he used in favour of redistribution, but it must be on a fair basis and not merely a cutting off of the tassels of the Celtic fringe without redressing any of the other inequalities of our system. They must deal also with the University seats and small boroughs where corruption lingered. Turning to the part of the Bill which dealt with the holding of all elections on one day, he was not sure whether his right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Morley) would not have to modify his proposal to suit the convenience of certain constituencies; but he was certain that in the great majority of constituencies it would be quite possible and not more expensive to hold the elections on one day than to extend them over the long period of time during which they lasted at present. The prolongation of the election contest meant dislocation of business and civil inconvenience as bad as in the United States with their perpetual elections. His right hon. Friend who introduced the Bill need not be afraid that it would increase the expenses of the candidates. A larger staff which would have to be employed would receive less remuneration. At present candidates paid each time for the whole apparatus. Turning to the question of registration reform, whilst he most cordially agreed with most of what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth upon that subject, he would venture to ask him why during the six years that he and his Party were in Office nothing had been done to carry out any one of the suggestions of continuous Registers, for instance, which had been made from the Opposition Benches for the first time that night? Nobody believed more strongly than he in the necessity of altering the law with respect to the lodger franchise; but it was impossible to do that without putting lodgers and occupiers upon an equal footing, and to do away with the £10 limit and the provision for "sole and separate use." As for the enfranchising part of the Bill, in the reduction of the period of qualification, no more had been done than had been done in other Registration Bills to extend the franchise. In the Bill of 1878, for example, a separate occupation of part of a dwelling house was sufficient to enable a man to claim the franchise—in so far as the Bill effected that object it was an extension of the franchise. With regard to the three months' qualification, to use an expression which had been used by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, a good deal of "political bunkum" had been talked about the possibility of corrupting constituencies, by bringing into them a huge army of men, merely for electioneering purposes. Could it be imagined that a contractor, for instance, would go to the expense of importing an army of workmen into a constituency, and paying them for nine months in order that they might exercise the franchise? The suggestion must have been invented for a simple-minded audience on a country platform in order to discredit the Bill. In a case where nothing but natural causes were at work, and where a certain number of men, for a short time, were obliged to reside in a place where they had no real interest, the provisions of the Bill would get rid of a good deal of objection, because these men would not remain long on the Register. As soon as they left they would be struck off. There were several minor points in the Bill upon which when the instructions to the Committee were moved he would like to say a word or two, but at the present time he was content to assert that he believed it would be found possible in the Bill to do away with some of the technicalities of our registration system which ought not to be allowed to prevail in the future. Why should it not be laid down by the House of Commons that objections which went to the essence of a vote should be dealt with by the officer who made the revision? The Bill left a good deal yet to be done. It did not, and it did not pretend to, make symmetrical our existing system, but in the English fashion it sought to deal in a practical way with obvious mischiefs. It was by no means a cut-and-dried plan of symmetrical proportion, but because it lopped off some excrescences of the electoral system and remedied some glaring injustices he should support it on that occasion and upon the subsequent occasions when it would come again before the House.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford) said, the hon. Member who last addressed them had expressed the desire that lodgers should be more easily placed on the Register, and had made an appeal on that score to the occupants of the Opposition Benches. He thought the hon. Member should have more properly addressed himself to his own Leaders, and have asked them how it was that the facilities which they afforded to lodgers in the Bill of last year were not in the Bill now before the House. If the Government answered according to the spirit of truth they might have to tell the hon. Gentleman that from the Debates of last Session and from other sources they learned that the lodgers as a whole voted Conservative, and that it was not, after all, extremely desirable to give them facilities for being placed on the Register. He admitted, with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, against whom, if this Bill became law, he should not have the pleasure of voting again as he had had before, that the Conservatives made a great mistake in 1884-85 when they desired to separate the urban from the rural constituencies. It was then thought that the strength of the Conservative Party lay in the country, and that the Radicals, being the more advanced and aggressive, and, if they liked to say so, more intelligent Party, would find their strongest support coming from the towns. He ventured to say at that time that the Conservatives were wrong in taking that view, and his prophecy turned out to be correct. The opinions of the electorate had completely changed from what they were 10 or 15 years ago, as proved by the very fact that a Bill containing the provisions of the Bill now under consideration had been brought before Parliament. They had the other night the right hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill admitting, with some show of regret, that the strength of the Conservative Party lay among the working men in the great towns and centres of industry. The main effect of the Bill would be to disfranchise out-voters, who belonged to the intelligent classes, and, by lowering the period of qualification, to enfranchise men at the opposite end of the social scale. He did not think they ought to leave out of account the way in which this Bill was brought forward. It was not introduced by the responsible Minister, but by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Could the fact that the Bill had been brought in by the Chief Secretary for Ireland be intended as a broad hint to the Irish Home Rule Members that the Bill really aimed at the conversion of the "predominant partner" to the policy of Home Rule? The hon. Member for the Maldon Division of Essex (Mr. Dodd), in addressing his constituents recently, had said—and the House knew that the hon. Member had great authority with the Government—

> "The Franchise Bill was brought in for the purpose of increasing Radical seats, because he was sure the new electors would be of their Party, as the out-voters who were disfranchised by the Bill were all owners of property and belonged to the Conservative Party; for instance, in the Romford Division he estimated there would be about 3,000 of the present electors disfranchised, which would make it a sure seat for the Radicals at the next Election."

That was plain speaking, and probably expressed the real feelings of the Government and their supporters. In 1884 the Conservatives objected to a Franchise Bill unaccompanied by redistribution; and the Chief Secretary, speaking at a meeting at St. James's Hall, said—

> "What, not in earnest about redistribution! Do you think we are such fools as not to wish for redistribution that we may take seats from the South of England, where the Liberal Party is weak, and give seats to the North of England, where the Liberal Party is strong?"

That was something very much like gerrymandering the constituencies. If the Liberal Party was strong in the North of course they ought to have seats there, but if the Conservatives were strong in the South they were entitled to retain their seats there. It seemed to him that the expression of opinion at St. James's Hall 10 years ago differed very little from that which fell from one of the right hon. Gentleman's supporters at Pontefract a little time since. It was necessary to enter a little more deeply than previous speakers had done into the nature of the franchise, through which the State was vested with the protection of the rights which man in a state of nature would defend on his own account. Why did a man want a vote? Apart from the general ground of his concern in the welfare of the State, he wanted it to protect his property, to protect particular interests of his own. There were in this country particular interests which certain voters were more concerned in than they were in others, and apart from the general ground a man desired a vote in order to protect his particular interest in a particular place. Now, if they took away votes from a man who had more than one vote they might take from him the power of influencing that House in a place where a great deal of his private or class interest was situated. He would give an instance affecting his own constituency. There was a large grazier and buyer of cattle who lived in Buckinghamshire and who came down to Hereford market every week, and had permanent rooms kept for him there, and was on the Register. That man, of course, had interests in Buckinghamshire, but he also had interests in Hereford. He was interested in the prosperity of the town and neighbourhood and in the markets. Under this Bill, however, he could only vote for Buckinghamshire, and consequently had no means whatever of bringing any influence to bear upon that House by way of safeguarding his interests in Hereford. Let them take another case. A man who lived in Hereford went 16 miles off to a small town where he practised the law and where he might be registered as an occupation voter. Surely that man, while having his home in Hereford, had an interest in the particular locality from which he drew his income, where all his clients lived, and where he spent the best part of every day in business; and, if so, ought he not to be able to influence that House through the Member for that locality? The plural vote gave him the opportunity of protecting that particular interest. Again, suppose an Englishman had property in Scotland, and in England too. He would have a vote in England and in Scotland; but if under this Bill he had to vote in England, how could his interests in Scotland be safeguarded by giving a vote to an English Member who knew nothing at all about Scotch affairs? He did not wish to labour this point, and he thought he had now said enough to show how unjustly the Bill would work. The House should remember that it was not property that had the plural vote. Property was only the sign of a man's interest in the State. Admitting that a man had the right to protect his property wherever it lay in this country, they must see that the only way in which a man could influence that House for the protection of such property was by the exercise of the plural vote. Those who were not plural voters must very properly be supposed to have their interests centred in the place in which they dwelt. He was afraid that, after all, this measure was only devised for Party purposes. Of course, he was not going to say that the Party system was not a good one or that the plan of government by Party was not the best; at the same time, government by Party did not mean government by one Party only. That, however, seemed to be the view of hon. Members opposite. Under the guise of improving the Registration Law and equalising the rights of voters in this country the Government were so manipulating the constituencies that they would be swamped not by the out-voters, but by the three months' man.

*MR. LEESE (Lancashire, N.E., Accrington) said, he cordially sympathised with and approved of the objects of this Bill. He said this because, although, like the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir E. Clarke), he was going to take exception to some parts of this Bill, he could at all events give his earnest support to the provisions for the reduction of the qualifying period to three months, the two revisions of the Register, the abolition of the disqualification for non-payment of rates, the elections to take place on one day, and the restriction of the vote of the elector to one constituency. If he had to differ from the Government in respect to omissions from the Bill he must say that he should very earnestly support them in regard to the provisions which he had enumerated. As hon. Members opposite would easily believe, it would be difficult for one holding his political convictions to differ from the Government, but he thought that if fault were to be found with the Government at all, it was not so much with the progressive character of the legislation they had initiated as with the omission of a few finishing touches needed to make that legislation complete. He was one of those who looked with great jealousy upon the influence of money in elections. In his view, there was very little difference between the actual buying of a seat and the expenditure of an unnecessary and undue amount of money in preparation for the election. It was within the power of a candidate for Parliament to debauch a constituency by extravagant payments under the cloak of legitimate expenditure almost as effectually as though, through his agents, he bought votes with money or beer. He hoped it would be understood that he was not making a charge against any candidate, nor was he casting a slur upon either of the Parties of the State, nor did he refer to the particular Party which happened to be the richest, although, of course, he could not help saying that, being in possession of most money, that Party naturally fell under the greatest temptation. Perhaps the House had already gathered that the omission from the Bill of which he complained was that the measure contained no provision for preventing the spending of money upon elections to a larger extent than had been the case in previous times. He had taken some pains to ascertain the public cost of preparing registration lists in his own division, and he thought he was justified in taking that division as a fair example of the great commercial constituencies and a typical commercial centre of Lancashire and Yorkshire. He had endeavoured to follow the Return, showing the cost of the preparation of voters' lists for the Metropolis, issued by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) when he was at the Home Office in 1892. It was somewhat difficult, even following the items in that Return, to find the exact amount of public expenditure in the whole division, but he had ascertained that last year the amount paid to the Overseer in the borough of Accrington for preparing the lists was £142. Printing came to £99, publishing on church doors and other public places £25, and there was a further sum for miscellaneous expenses of revision (excluding Revising Barristers' fees) of £18. He had been unable to ascertain accurate details as to the cost in the outlying portion of the constituency, but it so happened that in the Accrington Division the large town of Accrington was in the centre of the constituency with about 40,000 inhabitants, and just about half the number of voters in the whole division. It had been suggested to him as a fair calculation to make that the total of £285 for registration matters in the town of Accrington might, under these circumstances, fairly be doubled, and that would give a total of £570 as the cost of registration in the whole division. But there was another charge to be added which had to be paid by the County Council for Lancashire—namely, the cost of printing the Registers, and that amounted to £122, and if they added £200 for Revising Barristers they got a total of £892. That was as near as he could make it the present public contribution for the purpose of registration in his division. In round figures it was a sum of £900. This Bill, although it did not propose to alter the machinery as that of last year did, proposed to get more work out of it. The Overseers were to remain. They were not to be superseded by Superintendent Registrars or District Registrars, and Clerks of County Councils in counties, or Town Clerks in the case of boroughs, would issue their precepts to the Overseers to prepare the lists as hitherto. The lists would be made, printed, and published and revised just as they were before; but under the new proposal this would have to be done twice instead of once, and there would be a double set of proceedings. And now he asked what was all this extra work to cost? If during the second revision the same salaries were paid, and if the same charges were made for printing, publishing, &c., as now, the £285 must stand at the same figure for Accrington borough, and that amount doubled would be the cost of the registration under the new system. If the £122 were added to the cost of the printing of the lists there would be a total of £692, or, in round figures, £700. In making the second calculation he had deliberately omitted to include any further fee or allowance to the Revising Barrister. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Why?] There were a good many men of his profession, and he thought outside that profession, who were of opinion that the Revising Barristers were already very well paid. If the £700 were added to the £900 which would be payable under the present system, the total cost from public sources in his division would be, as nearly as he could estimate, £1,600. He had made no provision, however, for the increased number of names there would be on the list, and as the Overseers were paid 2½d. per head for each person on the Register, and as the printing would cost more, he thought he might reasonably add another £100, which brought the total cost from public sources up to £1,700. He did not desire to be misunderstood; he did not complain of this large expenditure. It seemed to him to be money that would be rightly and properly spent. He thought that the reduction of the residential qualification, and the consequent two revisions, were cheap at the price. There was, however, no provision in the Bill for this extra expenditure, and he assumed it would have to come out of the same sources as at present. He accepted that, and he assumed that everybody in the House would agree that it was right that public money should pay for the preparation of these lists; and, further, everybody would agree that the lists so paid for should be accurate and complete lists. It must be remembered, however, that the private expenditure connected with registration would be increased in the same proportion as the public expenditure. If the work paid for by the public and executed by public servants was efficiently done, there ought to be no need for any private expenditure at all. He made no charges or insinuations against anyone, but he contended that if the Overseers had done their best—as he believed they had—and that their work had notwithstanding to be supplemented by work paid for by private persons, there must be something radically wrong in the system. What alarmed him was that there was no attempt made in the Bill to perfect the present machinery and so to remove the heavy tax which fell at present upon a comparatively few earnest and ardent politicians of both Parties in each constituency. In Accrington the cost of maintaining the two Party Associations was, he was advised, about £900. Taking the rateable value of the division at £290,000, and deducting 2 per cent. for unoccupied premises and variations in assessments, an impost of about ¾d. in the £1 would produce this £900. Of course, the increase in the number of voters would add to the cost of maintaining and working these two Party Associations. It could not be supposed that the £900 would pay for an enlarged Register and for two revisions a year instead of one, as there would necessarily have to be more clerks, more sub-agents, more canvassers, and more book-keeping. His hon. and learned Friend (Sir E. Clarke) had said that one-half more than the present cost would be enough, but on the advice of careful and thoughtful experts he would suggest that one-third more would be sufficient. Consequently, the £900 would become £1,200, and the total cost of the registration under the new system would be nearly £2,900, after adding together the expenditure coming from public and from private sources. Everybody in the House of Commons knew only too well all about Registration Associations, with their agents, sub-agents, canvassers, and clerks, to say nothing of bogus claims and bogus objections. He believed that these registration contests were as fairly and efficiently conducted in his division as they were in any place in England, and yet what were the results? During the five years between 1889 and 1893, the Tory and Liberal claims for Accrington heard by the Revising Barrister had amounted to 5,500, of which 1,900 had been allowed; whilst the objections had numbered 8,000, of which 5,000 had been allowed. There had, therefore, been about 3,500 bad claims and upwards of 3,000 bad objections, which meant that to that extent the two Parties had tried to put men on the Register who ought not to be on, and to keep men off who ought to be on. He blamed no one, but he had much to say against the system which made such things possible. He might be asked what was the remedy? He said frankly, that he could see no possibility of getting rid of the present tax as long as private individuals and Party Associations were permitted to amends the lists. The only true way, in his opinion, was to make the list published by the Overseer or by some other and responsible person who was put in his place the final list. In a constituency where the registrations were keenly fought, and both sides were well equipped with money, the practical result was very little in favour of either side, and he should think that under such circumstances a reduction of armaments would be a wise course to pursue. If one Party in a constituency happened to be poor and the other to be rich, the poor Party was certain to be sadly and cruelly punished in the Revision Courts. He should imagine that the adoption of two registrations a year and of a shorter period would make the proposal that the Overseer's list should be final more reasonable than it would be under the present system, because if by any chance a voter was left off, the rapidly succeeding Registers would make the omission of his name less serious. He could see no other means of escape from the rapidly coming time when the richest party in the State would *ipso facto* be that which wielded the greatest political power. Unless this proposal were adopted he thought the public ought to bear all the cost of the supplementary examinations and corrections of the present imperfect list. The feeling in his constituency, among Conservatives as well as Liberals, was that the present system was indefensible, and he could not conceal from his right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill their dismay at the inevitable continuation and increase of this intolerable tax on the earnestness and sincerity of political feeling of both Parties. He should have liked to say a word or two more, but the period had arrived when it was customary to take a brief adjournment, and he was loth to stand between hon. Members and their proper leisure. As to returning officers' expenses in his constituency, he thought both sides would say that they should be paid by the public. He came somewhat fresh from an election, and, therefore, had this question of expenses fresh on his mind. At the last election for the Accrington Division he paid £202 out of his own pocket, and his courteous and amiable opponent, Mr. Hermon Hodge, had to pay the same sum to provide polling stations, ballot-boxes and papers, presiding officers, clerks, &c., in order to enable Her Majesty's lieges, the free and independent electors of Accrington, to exercise the national right of voting for their own Member of Parliament. This had only to be stated for all to agree that it was monstrous. There was a real danger ahead. The expenditure of money in elections was growing and increasing. When he fought Accrington in 1886 the cost was £850 for each candidate. In 1892 it had grown to £1,050, and in December, 1893, to £1,260. This Bill, excellent in its enfranchising clauses, rather added to this danger than reduced it. For lovers of purity of election, for men who sought for the true and uncorrupted verdict of the people, amongst whom he included his hon. Friends opposite as well as himself, this Bill was a disappointment. It was not only a disappointment but a danger, for these increased costs must mean that useful men, who were perhaps endowed with more wisdom than wealth, would be prevented —to the country's loss—from rendering public service in the House of Commons; and if he had only succeeded in bringing these facts more vividly to the mind of the Government so that some change could be made in Committee, he should count his efforts as successful indeed.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that if it were a reproach to have opposed previous proposals of the Government on the subject of registration reform, he at any rate was free from it, for he had actively supported the last Registration Bill brought in by the Secretary of State for India, and he had also voted in favour of the Bill introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. In his view, there were few subjects in which the constituencies were more interested than in the question of registration reform, and he was satisfied that there was a well-founded claim for great alterations in the present law. Registration reform was the most important feature of the Bill, and it was that which would guide him in his vote. It was considerably more urgent than any question of plural voting or elections on a particular day, and he was sorry that the Government had lost a great opportunity. The anomalies and inequalities of the present Registration Law called strongly for amendment. He would take as an instance the question of the qualifying period of residence. No one could contemplate the possible 27 months of exclusion of voters from the

Register without admitting that reform was needed, and what was worse than this denial of the right of franchise was the inequality between neighbouring voters, which they could not appreciate, as to the time at which they might be respectively called upon to exercise the franchise. Instead of recognising this right, it seemed to him that every possible difficulty was placed in the way of the voter. Instead of making it easy to get on the Register and difficult to get off, which ought to be done, every impediment was interposed. In addition, registration was surrounded by technicalities and absence of opportunities for amendment on the part of the Revising Barrister, which greatly interfered with the operation of the law. Could anything be more unjustifiable than that such an Amendment as this could not be made? If the qualification was stated to be a "dwelling house" instead of "dwelling house successive occupation," the Barrister was powerless to make any amendment, and the voter was deprived of his right. It was literally true, as had been stated by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, that the lodger franchise was a most technical franchise. Having observed a large number of claims, he did not impute that they were based upon fraud, but he could say that scarcely one in a hundred was properly filled up, and probably a very small proportion would be held good if they were seriously contested on points of law. In the case of the lodger franchise, too, there was the invidious distinction of the absence of successive occupation, and other disabilities—in fact, that franchise might be said to depend almost upon the opinion of the Revising Barrister and the different Overseers, and very often there was a difference of decisions in almost the same neighbourhood. He believed the principle of the lodger franchise, as it existed at the present moment, to be wrong, and instead of allowing voters to construct, if they could, claims based upon very artificial values it would be far better to adopt the household rule, and allow houses of certain value to carry a certain number of voters. One of the defects of the Bill was that it not only failed to deal with the lodger franchise, but it made no attempt whatever to give those facilities to which that class of voter was entitled. The Member for the Forest of Dean said that whatever difficulties might be created would be remedied to a great extent by additional voluntary work. He took a different view. He regarded the political drudgery of attending a revision as the very worst form of political employment, as a dissipation instead of an increase of political energy, and for that reason he strongly regretted the inadequacies of this Bill. He thought, too, with regard to revision, that it contained a misapplication of the combative spirit of our law. It seemed to him that it was ill-applied in the case of the assertion of the right to vote. This was a right which ought to be investigated and established, and not one in which political Parties should make it a duel as to whether an individual voter should be entitled or not. One strong reason he had for registration reform was that he desired to retain household suffrage as the franchise of citizenship, and he was convinced that anything which tended to make it exclusive instead of inclusive greatly endangered the ultimate position of that principle. He was desirous, by shortening the period of residence, and offering facilities to voters entitled to be on the Register, that they should be afforded an opportunity of becoming so at the earliest possible moment consistently with evidence of their legal possession of the right. For these reasons, he thought it very undesirable that this question of registration should be made in any sense of the term a mere Party question. In introducing the Bill of last year the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India did him the honour of quoting what he (Sir A. Rollit) had said at their own Conservative political organisation in favour of such reform, and he had not only introduced measures for this purpose, but had consistently supported the proposals of the right hon. Member for Halifax and the Secretary of State for India in his Bill of last year. He supported that Bill because it redressed a great many anomalies of registration; because it shortened the period of residence required for voters, and because it adopted the principle of a public officer for registration purposes, and got rid of the combative principle. All experience tended to the conclusion that that was the best and proper mode of dealing with the matter. The experience of Scotland was amply in point. He knew one hon. Member, then present, who represented a constituency containing 18,000 voters, where the whole registration process, as in other boroughs in Scotland, was automatic, where the Register was in constant preparation, and where, if there were any difficulty or doubt, the point was taken by the Sheriff—the counterpart of whom in this county would be the County Court Judge or Stipendiary Magistrate—and quickly disposed of without expense to the parties or inconvenience to the applicants. In the course of some two or three years the whole time consumed in the process of appeal, which always gave satisfaction, had not exceeded three hours. He also supported the Bill of last year because he thought it just to the lodger franchise. It seemed to him that instead of reproducing these real reforms the present Bill failed to deal with defects in the present system of registration. To his mind, this was a much worse Bill, and from the registration point of view he was bound to condemn it as a bad and retrograde Bill. It not only did little or nothing in relation to registration reform, but in some respects did that which ought not to be done. He thought it was inadequate, incomplete, and quite unequal to the demands made, and he did not think he should have difficulty in showing that in many respects it absolutely intensified the evils which existed at present, and which it ought to amend. Take as an illustration the present system of conducting registration. He said that while the voter sought a right which ought to be readily recognised every impediment was put in his way, and this Bill, if it did not double the difficulties and inconveniences, very materially increased them. So far as voters were concerned under this Bill they might have to claim twice a year; they might be subjected twice a year to objections, real and frivolous, and if they did not appear they might lose their votes, so that from that point of view it might be a disfranchising measure. To the political Parties it would greatly increase the necessity of organisation. He thought Party organisation was already carried to a great extreme, and he thought that by this means they should place the political Parties and Members and candidates in the hands of experts to a great extent, and they should have the turmoil and trouble of almost perpetual political mechanical work. There was one other point in respect to which he thought this was a retrograde measure. The Party opposite prided itself in giving opportunities for labour candidates, and it was desirable that labour should have a fair share of representation in that House. But how, under this Bill, would a Labour Member or candidate be affected? The wealthy would be made more powerful; those who had the most wealth and the greatest resources would be able probably to continue to occupy their position; but in the case of those who had not means, and particularly labour candidates, it would either be impossible for them to obtain an equal chance or a more favourable position, or it would throw upon themselves or their own labour organisation additional cost. In addition, the Bill did not attempt to deal with any of the technical points which bristled in connection with revision. There was no attempt to create some consolidation of the law. The right to vote was distinctly hidden from the voter in numerous Statutes, which none but experts could collect and understand. One of the first things that ought to be done in connection with registration reform was to give a Code which people could readily understand, but no attempt was made in that direction. Very little was done for the lodger, who was merely saved from a claim in a second revision, and was left with all that disability which the Secretary of State for India emphasised of having to make and prove his claim year by year, his inducement to exercise the franchise being thereby greatly diminished. An hon. Member, he noticed, proposed to add to the inconvenience in an Amendment calling upon the lodger to produce independent evidence of the value of the premises occupied. In his opinion, that value was arbitrary, difficult to prove, and based upon a wrong principle, and the value of the house itself ought to determine the adequacy or otherwise of the lodger franchise. Again, there was nothing about one Register—one burgess roll for the boroughs and one set of lists for the county, and no attempt to do what ought and might be done and had been done in Scotland—to automatically prepare the Register and have it in constant progress, and as closely as possible up to date when an election took place. All these questions affecting the right to vote, which materially reduced the franchise and jeopardised the principle of household suffrage, were urgent points, while the political questions dealt with in the Bill might in many cases be deferred until a wider and more comprehensive measure dealt with the whole question of the franchise. He thought the suggestion of elections on one day was very much in accord with the views constantly expressed by Chambers of Commerce in relation to the long continuance of the turmoil and very deleterious effect on business produced by the holding of a General Election. On the question of plural voting there was a great deal to be said, and the subject was greatly exaggerated; but an inconsistency in the Bill was, that while plural voting was to be taken away on the ground that it represented property, still the option of where the vote should be exercised was to be given and based upon the very same principle. If property was not to be a factor in such a matter why should property confer the right on the voter to vote for one division or another according to his choice? He thought the proposal which allowed a man to vote in one district or another might also have the grave disadvantage of the manipulation by political Parties of the Register with the view to casting the balance in doubtful constituencies. But he preferred to rest objection to this Bill on the fact that if property was not to be a factor to the vote it ought not to be a factor to the option which in itself was a right based upon property. While he appreciated in the very strongest degree the necessity for registration reform, while he had consistently supported every measure which had been brought before the House in principle with that object, and while the Government had had what support he could give on the last occasion in favour of their Bill, he considered that this measure differed materially from the former Bill, that it completely failed to deal with the pressing questions of revision at the present time, and it placed by contrast in positions of importance questions which relatively, so far as the possession of the franchise was concerned, were both numerically and politically far subordinate to the question of a complete Register, that he could not give it that support he should otherwise have been glad to have given it, and on the ground of the insufficiency, incompleteness, and inadequacy of the registration proposals he should feel it his duty to vote against the Bill.

*Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) said, that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down claimed credit to himself for having supported the Registration Bill of last year, and condemned the present Bill for not containing a codification of the law. But he would point out that that was a defect which belonged also to the Registration Bill of last year. There was one point on which he cordially agreed with the hon. Member. He did not see why the possession of property, or rather a particular kind of property, in more constituencies than one should entitle a person to choose in which constituency he should vote, any more than it should entitle him to give more votes than one. He should be compelled to vote in the constituency in which was situate the house in which he resided, or if he resided in several he should vote in that county in which he most habitually resided. They were not merely engaged upon the Second Reading of this Bill. They were also discussing an important Amendment, moved in one of the ablest and most interesting speeches he had had the good fortune to hear by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth—an Amendment which raised and brought before the House a very distinct issue. The hon. and learned Member complained that this measure of reform of registration was not accompanied by a scheme of redistribution, and the method of carrying out the object he desired was to move an Amendment which, if carried, would not give them redistribution but would prevent them having registration. That might be good advocacy—of that he could not judge—but it did not seem to him to be good politics. The hon. and learned Member complained that the Government were redressing one set of anomalies and were paying no attention to another; and he asserted and endeavoured to show that the present distribution of seats was unequal and unfair, and in order to prove his proposition he had brought forward the case of one part of the United Kingdom, and one part alone. He had referred to Ireland and had asserted—what was perfectly true—that according to the principle of population Ireland was over-represented in that House, and he had not thought fit to examine the question whether other parts of this country or portions of these parts might not be equally over-represented. The hon. and learned Gentleman was, of course, too well informed to talk about gerrymandering the constituencies, but people outside, representatives of the Party opposite, had accused the Government of attempting in this Bill to gerrymander the constituencies. What was gerrymandering? It was a word derived from the performances of a certain Governor of Massachusetts who, at the beginning of this century, unfairly divided the constituencies of that State for the benefit of his own Party; in other words, he produced an unfair distribution Bill. They could not gerrymander constituencies in a Registration Bill, and what people who brought this charge against the Government advocated was, that the Government should not do what was incompatible with gerrymandering, but that they should do what would enable them to gerrymander. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not taken that point. He had not adverted to the fact that the Redistribution Act agreed to by both Parties in the State was not yet 10 years old, whereas the system of registration dated from a very much longer time back than that. It might be rash, but he (Mr. Paul) had indulged in a little amateur redistribution, and had not confined himself to Ireland, but had taken the whole of the United Kingdom. He had adopted a process which, whatever else might be said of it, was at all events simple. He had taken, as the Redistribution Act of 1885 took, the basis of population. He had taken 40,000 as the population which ought to entitle a constituency to a Member, and he had struck off all those constituencies where the population was less than 40,000, except in the case of those counties—of which there were several in Ireland, but, he thought, only one in England, Huntingdon—where the two divisions had a population of less than 40,000 each, and in that case he had given such county one Member, and in every case where the population was over 80,000 and there was only one Member he had given two, and where the population was over 120,000, three. That gave a considerable margin, and had the not undesirable result of somewhat reducing the size of that House. But what was the result of that process from the Party point of view? It struck off from the majority of the Government 45 seats, and it struck off from the Opposition 40 seats. That was a balance in favour of the Opposition of five. It added to the Government 33 seats, and to the Opposition 34. That was a balance in favour of the Opposition of one, or, adding it to the five, a balance of six. But if they went upon the principle of One Man One Vote and One Vote One Value they must strike off the University seats, which were nine, and that left the Government with a balance of three. He would not pledge himself to that figure of three, being, he dared say, a bungling arithmetician; but what he said, and what he was prepared to prove, was that under no fair system of redistribution whatever would the Liberal Party have anything to lose. Of course, in his calculation he had included Ireland; and if they excluded Ireland the advantage would be very considerable to the Liberal Party. The only statesman who had made any serious attempt to reduce the representation of Ireland on the basis of pure population was the right hon. Member for Midlothian, who did it in his Home Rule Bill of last year. If they were not to give Home Rule to Ireland, and if they were, nevertheless, to reduce the Irish representation, they would find themselves confronted with a very serious problem indeed, compared with which any difficulty of registration would be exceedingly small. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean in the course of his speech said that both Parties had agreed in 1885 not to interfere with the Irish representation, and he was very much struck with an interruption of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, who said that that was because the Irish representation was guaranteed by the Act of Union. They on that (the Liberal) side were inclined to agree with Mr. Bright that the Act of Union was a Statute which Parliament passed and which Parliament could repeal; but a very different view had been taken by gentlemen opposite. It had been represented over and over again in the discussions on Home Rule by gentlemen on the other side of the House as a Treaty which could only be dissolved by the consent of all the parties to it. An integral portion of that Treaty was that the representation of Ireland should be at least 100, and to reduce that representation without the consent of Ireland would be, by the admission of the Party opposite, unless it were accompanied by a measure of Home Rule, a breach of international faith which this country ought to be ashamed to commit. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth taunted the Liberals with their desire for the abolition of the plural vote. The hon. and learned Member, not in the amiable manner which usually distinguished him, attributed to the Liberals rather discreditable motives. He said they were not the educated nor the intelligent Party, that education and intelligence had left them altogether, and, as these qualities were in some peculiar manner personified by the plural voter, they were anxious to disfranchise that personage in order that they might rely on the ignorance of people who had only one vote. He had been made acquainted with many views about the plural voter, but not before to-day had he been told that the plural voter was the peculiar representative of intelligence. That was a singular, almost a miraculous, coincidence. He could understand in the abstract an educational franchise, though he did not see how it could be worked. He could understand competitive examinations on the system of one mark one vote, though it would be so ridiculous as to be almost sublime. He could conceive a pecuniary franchise—one pound one vote; though he did not think it would commend itself to the people of this country. It reminded him of a curate reproached by his Bishop for not believing as much as himself. The curate said, "Consider the difference of remuneration. I am sure that, pound for pound, I believe as much as your Lordship." But plural voting did not even represent wealth. A man might have £100,000 a year, and only one vote. The University franchise was believed to belong to the quintessence of educated intelligence. It was supposed by those who had not been to Universities that academical degrees indicated abnormal wisdom. He was not ashamed to confess that he had taken a degree. He had never, however, had a vote for his University, because, being rather short of cash, he thought he could employ what he had better than in proceeding to the degree of Master of Arts. There was one more point, he was sorry to say, connected with himself. The Member for Plymouth told them that he had three votes. He had only one vote. This, of course, was as it should be, because the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth was not three times, but 30 times, better educated than he or any other Member of the Liberal Party. But if, instead of occupying the house which he happened to own, he was to let it and live somewhere else, he could obtain two votes. Would he become more intelligent or wiser? The truth was, that plural voting was a ridiculous franchise, founded on no principle whatever. It was a fictitious and an arbitrary franchise, which could not be defended on any principle, or even on any combination of principles, however ingenious or grotesque. A man exercising it need have no local interest whatever, and need never enter the constituency except on the day of the poll. For his part, he regretted that this system would not, under this Bill, be abolished altogether. With regard to the provision for holding elections on the same day, the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth sought to establish, not altogether without success, that some parts of the Bill would unduly increase the expense of elections. On the question of disqualification for non-payment of rates, the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had been good enough to refer to the country in which he had the honour of representing a constituency, and had argued that the rates in Scotland would not be paid unless non-payment of them constituted a disqualification. That was a very singular theory. Rates were not voluntary contributions. If it was said that it would be a disgrace to a man to be disfranchised and would lower him in the eyes of his neighbours, which of the two cases was the worst? To lose the vote or to be sold up? To be taken off the Register or to have the bailiff in the house? He would ask the House whether it was prudent and dignified to employ the Parliamentary franchise as a means of assisting the rate collector? It was his business to get the money, to say nothing of the question, which did not arise so often in Scotland, but which was very prominent in England—the case of a man who had his rates nominally paid by the landlord, and who might be disfranchised through no fault of his own. That was a system which nobody would defend. There were, however, portions in the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman with which he felt some sympathy. He could not bring himself to see the absolute necessity of the double Register. The Bill of last year provided for a supplemental Register, which would satisfy the requirements of Scotland; and he hoped the Government would reconsider the question, and ask themselves whether this double Register was an integral part of the Bill. He did not see any answer to the argument of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth that there was only a technical distinction between the lodger and the householder. How could it affect a man's citizenship whether his landlord lived on the premises or off them? Why, again, should there be any pecuniary qualification for a lodger? The Chief Secretary said that if they dealt with the lodger question they would cut deep into the franchise. He could not for the life of him see the distinction between dealing with the qualification of time and the qualification of money. If they altered the period for which a man resided, were they not dealing with the franchise just as much as if they were dealing with the rent which the man must pay?

Mr. W. LONG: Hear, hear!

Mr. PAUL said, he was glad the hon. Member for West Derby agreed with him, and he hoped the Government would take the question to heart. They had heard from one of their leading opponents a most powerful argument to show that there was no distinction between the lodger and the householder. Would they act upon it? He believed it to be the fact that at this moment in the City of Edinburgh no single working man could get on the Register as a lodger, because the Sheriff said that £10 a year meant 6s. a week. The interpretation of the qualification was what was called, in the language of lawyers, a question of fact. He should have thought that it was a question of arithmetic. If they had a proper franchise, a universal franchise, there would be no question of bogus or sham qualifications. He was not sure that the inclusion of large numbers of citizens in the franchise, who had no votes now, would always make in favour of the Party to which he belonged, but he did not think they had any business with that. They ought to do what was fair and right to all classes of the community, and then they were not responsible for the consequences. The lodger franchise as it was left by the Bill could not be defended. He hoped the Bill might be amended and improved in Committee. If it was amended and improved in Committee he cared very little what would happen to it in another place, because either it would be accepted, and then they would have a good measure, or it would be rejected, and then they would have a good argument.

Mr. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, the House had listened with attention and great satisfaction, and with some considerable amount of amusement, to the speech of the hon. Member for South Edinburgh. The hon. Gentleman invariably succeeded in putting his arguments before the House, not only with force and ability, but with such a degree of humour which, if it did not make the arguments acceptable to the House generally, it made them more palatable than they would otherwise have been. The Opposition had no right to complain of anything that fell from the hon. Member for South Edinburgh, but he did not think the Government were in quite as favourable a position as the

Opposition on that point. He listened with the greatest possible care to the speech of the hon. Member, and it seemed to him that the hon. Member defended what he thought ought to be in the Bill, but was not, and he had very little to say for that which the Bill proposed to do. The hon. Gentleman advocated a complete reform of the franchise on lines which were not in the Bill; and, as usual, he had made a calculation to show that the result of redistribution would be satisfactory to the Party to which he belonged, but it was the custom of political prophets to arrive at conclusions which were found to be far-fetched when the real results became known. In any event, this was not a Bill which ended, as it should end, with the redistribution of political power which it commenced by disturbing. The hon. Gentleman at the end of his remarks expressed the hope that the Bill would be largely amended in Committee. He ventured to say that if the recommendations which the hon. Member gave to the Government were accepted and carried out there would be precious little left of the original measure when it emerged from Committee, for in order to fall in with the suggestions of the hon. Member, the Government would practically have to reconstitute and redraft the measure. He approached this question of registration on the whole as impartially as it was possible for a man to do, because he was in this fortunate position—that he represented a constituency which no Bill, even of the ingenuity of that introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, could upset or alter. He represented a constituency which was purely and entirely working class, and which enjoyed no advantage from dwellers in other parts, who gave their votes on the day of election in constituencies in which they did not reside. But apart from that consideration, he had never concealed his opinion that with due reason and common sense every facility should be given to the people of this country who were qualified to be voters to become voters. He, however, did not go quite so far as the hon. Member for South Edinburgh. He was not prepared to say he would desire to see such a measure of registration pass as would make everybody an elector, but he agreed that the fundamental principle which ought to underlie the possession of the franchise was residence rather than any other qualification which could give the right to vote. He believed himself that if they made it a necessity that a voter should be a resident in the locality, that if they attached to his residence a condition that he should have been there for a sufficient length of time to prove that he was practically a permanent resident with a real interest in what was going on around him, he believed they would have placed their franchise on a perfectly secure foundation. The hon. Member for South Edinburgh had indulged in some criticism of the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth with reference to education and intelligence,,but he did his hon. Friend an injustice. His hon. Friend had not asserted that the Party opposite did not contain among them men of great intelligence and great ability. The hon. Member himself was a striking repudiation of such a statement if made that it was possible to desire. What his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth had said was that hon. Gentlemen opposite had declared, through the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, that the distinction between the two political Parties was that on one side were to be found the classes and on the other side the masses. He admitted that the possession of property should not be taken as an indication that necessarily education, intelligence, or ability was possessed by the owner. But his hon. and learned Friend was justified in his argument that the possession of property was, at all events, a proof that the owner had a stake in the country, and was also an indication that there was education behind him, or, in any case, that he had some opportunities for studying the serious problems which the electors, and consequently the House of Commons, were called upon to decide. He was sorry that the most excellent speech of the hon. Member for Accrington earlier in the evening had been delivered in a rather empty House, though, perhaps, in the interest of the hon. Gentleman's Party and of the Government, it was well that the audience was sparse. It was a practical speech—a most clear and able speech—and it brought to bear on the proposals of the Government the most searching criticism which had yet come from the Government side of the House. He desired to approach the question from the same point of view from which it had been approached by the hon. Member for Accrington. He entirely agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth that it was necessary to facilitate the means by which a man qualified to vote for a Member of Parliament could get on the Parliamentary Register. There could be no doubt that it was a great hardship that a man should have to wait sometimes for two years before he got the qualification to vote to which he was entitled to long previously. He entirely agreed that Parliament should do everything that was fair, just and practical in order to remove those anomalies, but what he submitted was that the Government, while seeking to redress this wrong, had proceeded in the wrong direction. The disease being in one limb, they proceeded to apply the remedies to another. They had endeavoured to cure the weakness of the arm, so to speak, by attending to the leg. The real difficulty was not in the period of residence necessary for qualification. The difficulty centred in the delay attendant upon securing legal sanction to the right to vote. He might add that under the Bill the plural voters would be like the Militiaman who enlisted in several battalions. He made a big show in the different battalions, but all the time he was only one man, and effective only in one battalion. If the Government had proceeded to so alter the machinery by which these votes were rendered valid they would then have gone in the right direction. If they had been content only to deal with the anomalies of registration, to redress the injustice, and to facilitate the acquisition by an elector of the right to vote, they would have found on the Opposition side of the House as much support as they would now undoubtedly find opposition. This Bill would, in reality, turn upside down the electoral system of the country, and to make changes in the franchise to which it was impossible for the Conservative Party to assent. It was said that if the Bill were passed the power of the political organisations would not be increased. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth had pointed out that if the purposes of the Government were passed into law—that was to say, if they allowed the plural voter to remain, but left him the option as to where he should vote, they would put the power entirely in the hands of the individual voter, and, therefore, in the hands of the officers who conducted the political associations, because they would decide that the weight of those votes, on the one side or the other, should be cast where they would be most useful in the Party interest. The hon. Member for Gloucester opposite had doubted the accuracy of that statement, and had instanced the fact that during all the elections he had been through the outsiders had been canvassed by each side and brought up in considerable numbers. But that was not the point. The point submitted by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth was that they knew at the present time what the electorate was—the number of residents and the number of out-voters—but if this Bill passed they would never know till an election had taken place what a constituency was, what was its strength, and the number voting. The result would, therefore, unquestionably be an increased power of the political associations. Those difficulties would only be satisfactory to wealthy men, who did not care what it cost to get into Parliament, and therefore had no need to consider matters of this kind. It was, undoubtedly, a great objection to the Bill that it would add largely to the annual cost of registration. Indeed, the burden both of expenditure and labour would be doubled by having two registrations a year instead of one. In Liverpool the cost of looking after the registration of one voluntary association was between £3,000 and £4,000 a year, and nobody could doubt for a moment that this Bill would double the expense in a city where the population was not only rapidly increasing but constantly changing. The present difficulty in regard to these populous places was to see that the men who claimed were those entitled to be on the Register, and to secure this, house-to-house visitation was necessary. But the Government were now going to increase the difficulties of registration in large places like Liverpool. In the first place, they would double the labour of local Registration Bodies by having two registrations instead of one; and as, owing to the shortness of term, it would be easy to make bogus claims, they would have to exercise greater care in the house-to-house visitation in order to ascertain whether the man who claimed was the right man. He was sure that there was no one in the House—no matter on which side he sat—that would willingly see a measure passed which might facilitate a man's chance of getting on the Register who had not a full claim to be there. No doubt the present state of things could be improved, and in his opinion what was required was not a change in the existing Registration Laws but a Redistribution of Seats Bill. The Secretary for Ireland had brought forward the present Bill, he believed, from a simple and honest desire to carry out a reform which he and his Party considered to be necessary and in the interest of the country. He very much questioned, however, whether the right hon. Gentleman had realised what the effect of the measure would really be. It had been supported in such a way that one would suppose, after hearing the speeches of hon. Members, that the Government in bringing forward this measure were fighting the battle of the poor against the rich. Whatever charge might be made against the Conservative Party generally, he did not believe there was any foundation whatever for a charge of that kind. He did not think it was necessary in debating a matter of this kind to cast such charges across the floor of the House. He thought the representation of the rich and poor was much more evenly distributed in all quarters of the House. He would say that there was no desire on the part of the Opposition to obtain special privileges for the rich, but, on the contrary, there was a unanimous desire to give full, free, and fair play to all classes of the country to express their wants and to secure for them the sympathetic attention of a Democratic Parliament. He asserted again that this measure would lead to serious and grave difficulties in many constituencies. How would the Bill affect the City of Liverpool? In Exchange Division there were 7,134 electors, of whom 1,451 lived in the adjoining counties. They would under this Bill be subtracted from the electorate of the Exchange Division. [Mr. STOREY: Not necessarily.] He made that statement believing the Government meant to carry out their principle of "One Man One Vote," and it was immaterial, therefore, from which constituency they were subtracted. In addition to the 1,451, there were 1,155 electors in Exchange Division who resided in other Liverpool constituencies, so that if these two classes, numbering 2,606, exercised the privileges given them under the Bill and voted where they lived, the Exchange constituency would be reduced to 4,500. In the same way the 8,678 electors in the Abercromby Division would be reduced to 5,300. When he turned to West Derby, the division he represented, the electors there numbered over 10,500, while in the adjoining division of Everton there were about 10,300 electors, so that the result of the Bill would be to give to the 4,000 Exchange electors and to the 5,000 Abercromby electors the same political advantages and representation as was given to the 10,000 in the adjoining division. It might be said that they could not do everything in one Bill, and that the Government had not time to do it all at once. There was some justice in that statement, but if they wanted to carry useful and practical legislation likely to command the sympathy and support of the country they should not, in seeking to redress existing anomalies, create others far worse. One word more as to the effect of the Bill upon Liverpool. Not only would it create that extraordinary distinction between divisions he had mentioned, but it would go against the settled, hard-working people, and put power into the hands of the shifting and moving population, who had not the same stake in the country. So that the Bill would do a double injustice. He was rather surprised at first when he found that the Chief Secretary was in charge of this complicated measure, not because he doubted his capacity to deal with it, but because they used to regard the duties of his Office so laborious as to demand all his time and work, and if the Chief Secretary of the late Government had taken charge of such a measure the Irish Nationalists would not have been so silent as they now were. But his wonder ceased when he discovered what would be the practical effect of this measure in many parts of the country. The Chief Secretary once said that by carrying English legislation they would be facilitating the carrying of Home Rule. There was to be found the secret of the right hon. Gentleman having charge of this measure. For what would this Bill do? It would hand over the control of many of their large cities, both in regard to municipal and Parliamentary representation, to the Irish minority within the constituencies, and undoubtedly the English working men would consider that in doing that the Government was doing them an injustice, for it took the power from the settled population and gave it to the unsettled classes. It was for the English working man to consider whether he would quietly accept such a change. It had been suggested by hon. Members opposite that the conflict over this Bill was one between the wealthy and the poor, but he maintained that it was one between the resident working man and the moving and shifting working man. The change that the measure would make in the representation of the country would be so serious and so far-reaching that he should heartily support the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had said that the Bill had many critics and few friends. His experience of life was that the truest friend was the honest critic, especially in Parliamentary affairs, if, after the criticism, he took care to vote steadily with his Party. The hon. Member had said that the Government in proposing that a man with plural votes might decide to vote in one place or the other were acting in the same way as the Militiaman who enlisted in several battalions, who figured in all, and who yet was only one man. But the Government were doing exactly the reverse. They had at present those Militiamen voters who were in five or six constituencies; but as the Government laid it down that all the elections should take place on the same day, each of those voters would count only in one constituency. He wished to say generally that the Bill seemed to him a very hopeful Bill from the point of view of those who believed in a universal suffrage. He had always held that not only every man in the country, but that every woman in the country of full age should have the franchise; and he hoped that that state of things would soon be realised. At any rate, the admissions made by hon. Members opposite seemed to point in that direction. What was necessary was that every man qualified to vote should be put on the Register with the greatest possible ease, and that the mere fact of the settled residence should be a sufficient qualification either for a householder or for a lodger. Hon. Members opposite admitted that.

Mr. W. LONG: The hon. Gentleman must not take that for granted.

Mr. STOREY said, he was only stating a point on which all sides seemed to be agreed. Again, the hon. Gentleman had expressed his concurrence in the suggestion that a poor man should be able to chose as his Parliamentary Representative a man equally poor as himself, and, further, they all seemed to be agreed on the principle of "One Vote One Value." Indeed, it was understood that no objection would be raised by any considerable party in the House to the principle of "One Man One Vote." [Sir E. Clarke: No.] At any rate, they had been given to understand something very nearly approaching that. There were so many points of agreement between the two sides of the House that it ought not to be difficult to shape the Bill in Committee to the satisfaction of both Parties. He admitted frankly that the Bill came to them in a most inconvenient form, and that it dealt with the questions of registration and election in a very incomplete form. But hon. Members in connection with that must realise the exigencies of Parliamentary procedure and the limits of Parliamentary time. He did not accuse hon. Members opposite of being worse than his own Party were when in Opposition, for there had always been a tendency on both sides to deal with the measures of the Government of the day at such length as to prevent the chief Bill of the Session passing. Could hon. Members suggest any more practical or common-sense way of dealing with the question than that adopted by the Government? His opinion was that they had approached the question in a business-like fashion. He proposed first to deal with the question of "One Man One Vote." He was not one of those who held merely that every householder who was qualified should have a vote, but he was in favour of every man having a vote, and he would be very glad to see the Bill extended in that direction. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had suggested that they ought not so to extend it, because at present votes were not of equal value and the constituencies varied too greatly in size, and those inequalities should first be redressed. His Amendment told them in terms that if "One Vote One Value" were conceded the objections to "One Man One Vote" would disappear. [Sir E. CLARKE: Certainly not.] If that were so, then the Amendment was simply a trap. He submitted that the two things were not essentially one, although one followed upon the other, and it was quite practicable to deal with the one and leave the other for settlement in the near future. "One Man One Vote" was in their judgment just. The Government had been in Office two years, and would remain there another 12 months at the outside. Their supporters approved what they had done, the Opposition disapproved, challenges were being constantly thrown out for an appeal to the country. Soon the grand inquest of public opinion would be held to decide between the two Parties, and was it not strange that one Member of the jury should have 20 votes in the settlement of the controversy, while another jury had but one vote? Surely that was a state of things which could not fairly be defended. What were the grounds of defence put forward by the hon. and learned Member? It was submitted that property and intelligence ought to be specially represented. Well, he had to say, in the first place, that the possession of property did not always imply the possession of intelligence; and in this country there was a great deal of intelligence where there was very little property. The proposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite was that wisdom, experience, virtue, and base and sordid property should each have two votes. But even in this respect the suggestion would not work fairly, for it was only certain kinds of property that carried with it this right of excessive representation. He knew a man connected with shipping who was worth £250,000, and who had only one vote, and another who was worth a tenth of that sum, but who had six or seven votes in respect of little shops in different localities. The hon. and learned Member who proposed the Amendment had told them that he had three votes. He put it to the hon. and learned Member—who was admittedly a man of property and of intelligence—did he count for three at an election? [Sir E. CLARKE: I ought to.] The hon. and learned Member did himself an injustice. He did not count merely for three; he counted rather for 300 or 3,000 besides his actual votes. He had intelligence, knowledge, experience, and the power to sway men, and that was the power intelligence had and ought to be content with in this country. There was nothing new after all in the Government's proposal, because, in municipal elections, a man might have property in many different wards, but he had to choose which he would be put on for. They had an even more remarkable precedent than the municipal one. Birmingham was divided for Parliamentary purposes into seven different constituencies, but while a man might have a vote in all of them he could only vote in one. He held that "One Man One Vote" was a large step in the direction of every man and woman in the Kingdom having a vote. He was entirely in favour of the proposal that the elections should all be on one and the same day, because it would limit the disturbance of trade which attended every General Election, but he earnestly protested against that day being Saturday. He knew it was the best day for Newcastle, which his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary represented. Many a time they had laid their heads together and tried to get the election fixed for a Saturday. But for many other places Saturday was the very worst day of the week, and especially where it happened to be market day. And Monday would not do either, because it would lead to Sabbath breaking in preparations for the polling, and to that Presbyterian Ulster and Scotland would strongly object. As to the period of qualification, while, of course, he would strongly support the

Government proposal, he agreed with his right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean that the period fixed was even now too long, and he was in favour of one month instead of three months. In Durham and other places in the North of England term-day was not the 25th of March, but the 1st or 13th of May. That, being the summer quarter, was the favourite term for moving. By the 24th of June, persons so removing would not have been three months in residence, and thousands of these would be hit by this proposal of the Bill. With regard to the provision that the payment of rates should be a qualification for the franchise, he thought hon. Members did not sufficiently realise the circumstances under which numbers of poor people did not pay rates. He knew one place where thousands of people did not pay their local rates, and the reason was simply because the state of trade was such that they had no work, no money, and no food, and were therefore unable to pay. Yet these poor people were treated by the law as if they were vagabonds, and were struck off the roll for their misfortune and not their fault. Surely it was absurd to say that because these people did not pay their rates in time they should have no votes. Lord Salisbury, he was told, had recently spoken of the migratory class as vagrants, although he had since denied having used that term. However that might be, the migratory class was often spoken of as if it were a less worthy class than others. But there was nothing unworthy in the migration of these people. They migrated either because of slackness of work, because of the falling off of the income, and the consequent necessity to live in a less expensive house, or because they had to go further away to their work; and for that they were struck off the Register, and had to claim to get on again. That was an unnecessary burden of which he complained. What were the defects in registration at the present time? One, as the hon. and learned Member opposite had pointed out, was the failure to distinguish between the householder and the lodger. That was a serious and practical difficulty that ought to be met in the Bill. Then there was no supervision of the Overseers; but that was partially met by the power given to Parish Councils, if they saw fit, to supervise the operations of these officials. Another great defect that was unsolved by the Bill was that there was no provision for successive occupations. It ought to be the duty of the Overseer to seek out and verify successive occupations and put them on the Register. It ought not to be left to the man himself or to a political Party to do this work. Then, as to the question of expense, in connection with which he wanted to deal bluntly with the proposal that there should be two registrations in the year. This would practically amount to registration all the year round. Before the registration in April was over the new one would have to be begun. With regard to expense, the House might take it that the cost of registration at the present time to the public for the general Register was £350,000 a year. These figures he had arrived at by means of an independent investigation made in various districts. Then, under the Parish Councils Act, there was an entirely distinct charge for registration created of no less than £100,000 a year. Therefore, £450,000 a year would be spent out of the public rates for the purpose of registration. But that was not all. There was the expense to political Parties, which, he was informed by competent persons, was at least £250,000 a year. Therefore, £700,000 a year was now being spent in registration. Then came the proposal of the Government, which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see fit to modify, for a double registration. He did not say that would be double the present cost, but it would cost the public nearly £300,000 more, and political Parties, perhaps, another £200,000. He appealed to the Government and to the Liberal Party as a whole to seriously consider this matter. Let them for the moment leave the Conservatives out of the question, and suppose there were none in the House. Let them suppose there was nobody else there, and let them ask which was the Party that was likely to lose by this arrangement? Which was the Party that wanted candidates with brains rather than money? Liberals claimed to be that Party. They knew that at present their candidates and electors were heavily burdened, and yet the right hon. Gentleman proposed with a light heart to add to the expenses of the candidates and the Party all over the country an additional sum which might be reckoned, perhaps, at hundreds of thousands of pounds. He knew that that was an argument which ought to make hon. Members opposite vote for this proposal, and not against it, but, of course, they would look at the interests of the country as a whole, and not be influenced by what he said. But he thought his right hon. Friend should reconsider this matter. If the expenditure of this additional money was necessary he should not object to it, but he contended that it was not necessary in the slightest degree. On an average there was only one election in five years, and thus at present four of the annual Registers, speaking generally, were useless for Parliamentary purposes, except in the chance of a bye-election. If 10 Registers were made in the five years, nine of them, in the same way, would be useless for Parliamentary purposes, except in the case of a bye-election. Was it not, therefore, a great waste of labour and money to make so many Registers? But for how many people was the additional expenditure to be incurred? At the present time they were spending £700,000 a year, and the Registers comprised about 7,000,000 voters, including women. In round figures, this was a cost of about 2s. a head for every person registered. It would be found that 75 per cent. of those on the Registers were in settled occupation and were put on year after year. Therefore, only 25 per cent. on the Register were left to be dealt with as more or less migratory, and of that number 15 per cent. would be disposed of if a three months' qualification period was insisted upon and the rating clauses were abolished. Hence it would be for the sake of dealing with only the remaining 10 per cent. that the second Register would be made. Therefore, he maintained that a proposal to make this change, and to incur an expenditure of £300,000 a year for dealing with that small number on the Register, was an extravagant and a wasteful proposal, and one that ought not to be accepted by the House, at least in its present form. He put it to the Chief Secretary whether, in these circumstances, he did not think one Register was sufficient, and whether, in reconsidering the matter, he would not devise or consider certain proposals that had been suggested as to successive occupation and as to additional powers being granted to Overseers, with the consent of the town clerks in towns and county clerks in counties, to make the necessary transfers from one district to another. He believed if such a proposal was adopted it would put an end to any necessity for a second Register, and would secure practically that the great bulk of the persons whom the right hon. Gentleman wanted to be placed on the Register would be put upon it. His only desire was to secure, with hon. Members opposite, that as many persons as possible should be placed on the Register; and, in the interests of the public and of economy, he thought they should endeavour to attain that object in as inexpensive a way as possible.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, the Government had no reason to complain of the criticism of his hon. Friend, because no man in the House was more qualified by knowledge and experience to speak on the subject. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth, who brought forward the Amendment in a speech of great ability and interest, not only showed that he was well qualified to criticise a measure of this kind, but he was capable to lead a movement like that indicated by the Amendment, destroying the Bill, not by a direct attack, but by raising a side issue, no doubt of great importance, but irrelevant to the subject-matter of the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that some of the clauses of the Bill of last year were welcomed on the Opposition Benches, but the House would remember that the hon. and learned Gentleman gave them no assistance in passing those clauses. As to the difference between the Bill of this year and the Bill of last year, he would point out that that difference was in the main due to the omission of the clauses proposed by his right hon. Friend the Secretary for India, by means of which it was proposed to establish Chief Registrars in every constituency and Registrars in every parish. There was a great deal to be said in favour of that proposal, though it did not meet with the universal approval of hon. Members on the Government side of the House, and when it was announced that strenuous opposition would be offered to it by hon. Gentlemen opposite it became clear that the proposal could not be carried, and that, therefore, the Government would not be justified in proceeding further with it at that time. But he believed it was mainly in that direction they had to look in future to make registration an automatic process, so that voters might be put on the Register without the aid of political agencies. At some future time another Government might be more fortunate in this direction, but the withdrawal of those clauses reduced the Bill to moderate proportions, and made it possible this year to include other proposals with regard to plural voting and holding elections on the same day, which last year it had been intended to include in another Bill. He admitted that those additions prevented the Bill from being strictly called a Registration Bill. Though the Bill included other important points, it proposed to abolish certain anomalies which experience had shown to be hateful to the people of this country and detrimental to our electoral system. The first was the great length of the residential qualification; next, the ratepaying clauses of the Act of 1867; and, third, plural voting. On the subject of residential qualification, he stated that last year the Leader of the Opposition said it was an outrage that it should take a man two and a-half years to vote in a constituency, although he might possess every other qualification. With a 12 months' qualification, the shortest period in which a man could get on the list of voters was 18 months, and the longest period two years and six months, giving a mean period of two years. With a six months' qualification, the shortest period would be 12 months, and the longest period two years, giving a mean period of 18 months. With a three months' qualification and a single Register, the shortest period would be nine months, and the longest period 21 months, giving a mean of 15 months. Therefore, the mean period of qualification was not much reduced, and that fact had led the Government to consider whether it would not be wise to have a second registration. This would at once reduce the period of qualification by one-half. The second registration had been attacked on the ground of expense, and he agreed that it was not a matter which touched any great political issue or was the subject of great Party differences. It was merely a question of whether the advantages to be gained by a second registration were worth the cost. If the figures of the hon. Member for Sunderland were correct, the expense would undoubtedly be very heavy; but he ventured to think the hon. Member had not fully investigated the subject. It was undoubtedly the fact that the expenses of the present single registration were considerable. The expense of a single registration varied very much in different constituencies. In Birmingham, registration was carried out in the most perfect manner possible, and it was hardly necessary there for the political organisations to act at all. The cost was only 6d. per head of the electors, which was considerably less than half the average cost over the country. In London the cost was 1s. 2d., and in other parts of the country it varied from 6d. to 2s. 6d. If the whole registration of the country could be done as at Birmingham it would come out to be about 6d., whereas the average all over the country was 1s. 4d.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Can the right hon. Gentleman state the causes of this immense difference?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that he believed the difference was largely due to the printing, which was the main item of the cost of registration.

MR. STOREY said, that the cost of printing the Register was not one-fifth of the whole cost.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that in London the cost of printing was two-thirds of the whole cost of registration. In Nottingham the cost had been greatly reduced by the simple process of keeping the Register in type. If the registration of the whole country were done as cheaply and as well as in Birmingham, the total cost in England and Wales would not be more than £120,000, or not much more than one-third of the cost at the present time. Although a second registration would cost more than a single registration, he did not believe it would cost double, but he thought that if the registration of the whole country could be carried out on the Birmingham plan the whole cost would not be more than the present. The hon. and learned Gentleman expressed disapproval of the proposal of the Government to abolish the ratepaying conditions, but that proposal was a necessary consequence of reducing the residential qualification. These ratepaying conditions were of no value at the present moment, and were only a snare to a certain number of householders. He was greatly surprised to hear the hon. and learned Member defend the system of plural voting, and to say that it was no anomaly, but that the anomaly was that the principle was not further extended. The hon. and learned Member quoted John Stuart Mill in favour of this proposal, but from personal recollection he was satisfied that some time before 1867, when this question was under discussion in the House, Mr. Mill completely altered his mind. The proposal was made by Lord Derby's Government to extend dual voting, but it was condemned universally by all parties—by Lord Salisbury, by Mr. Lowe, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, and from every part of the House. There was no practical difference whatever between dual and plural voting. A man was subject to severe penalties for voting twice in the same constituency, and he believed that the practice of permitting plural voting outside the constituency was very much attributable to accident. Thus in Liverpool, Bradford, Birmingham, and other large towns, men holding several different qualifications within the borough could only vote once, but if a man resided just outside the borough and had another qualification in the town he was entitled to two votes. It was, however, in London that the system of plural voting exhibited the worst results. He knew, for instance, three partners in one firm—and he was sorry to say they were Liberals—who were registered in 20 different constituencies. [An hon. MEMBER: They have to pay the rates.] It was in the freehold votes that the system showed at its worst. The freeholders frequently had no interest in the districts in which they had votes; they did not even reside in them, and when the election came they did not even go into the constituency because they had polling places erected for them in London, and there they recorded their votes for Middlesex or Surrey. The result was that the Middlesex or Surrey divisions were swamped by non-resident freeholders who had no connection whatever with the constituencies, but who were able to override the views of the resident electors. This grievance had, in his opinion, been very much increased and multiplied by the Redistribution Act of 1885, by which the constituencies were broken up into single-membered districts. The County of Lancashire, for instance, was formerly divided into a limited number of constituencies, but the effect of the Redistribution Act was to cut it up into 23 different constituencies. He believed there were certain brewers who had public-houses scattered all over Lancashire, and who could vote in each of the 23 constituencies. In his opinion, this was a perfect scandal, and he could not imagine anyone defending it. It was worthy of notice that Members opposite had not dared to move an Amendment directly dealing with the question, but had raised side issues dealing with the representation of Ireland and the distribution of electoral power. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), in a speech of remarkable ability, had dealt with those issues in such a conclusive manner that little remained to be said about them. The condition of things in regard to Ireland had not altered since 1885. All those constitutional questions which were then considered by the House to make it impossible to reduce the representation of Ireland remained in the same position. Both Parties in 1885 concurred in the view that it was impossible to reduce the Irish representation. The consideration of the Act of Union prevented the House in 1885 raising the question, and if the question were again raised he did not for a moment doubt that the House as a whole would come to the same conclusion. Ireland was not the only part of the Kingdom that was over-represented. The rural parts of England were quite as much over-represented. The 17 most thoroughly rural counties of England had, curiously enough, a population exactly equal to that of Ireland—namely, 4,700,000; and by a further curious coincidence, they were represented by precisely the same number of Members—namely, 101. These Members were divided between the two Parties very much as the Irish Members were, although the majority was on the other side. There were 70 of these rural Members on the Opposition side of the House and 30 on the Government side; in the case of the Irish Members, 23 sat with the Opposition and the remainder supported the Government. There were also 22 other constituencies scattered about England, mostly small boroughs but including one or two small counties, returning 23 Members—a number which was plainly in excess of the proper number. If Parliament began to redistribute according to population it would have to begin with these small boroughs and counties before approaching the Irish Question. When gentlemen opposite said the Government were acting unfairly in dealing with one anomaly, and omitting to deal with another which was in the opposite direction, they were under a mistake. He thought they would find if they attempted a scheme of redistribution according to population that the Party they represented would not derive any benefit from it. They would have to get rid of the nine University Members, remove the excess in the representation of the rural districts of England, and then reduce the excessive number of Members who now sat for the boroughs of England. The Government would be perfectly ready to consider the whole question of redistribution whenever the proper time came. He was certain, however, that hon. Members opposite would have nothing to gain by a general scheme of redistribution. The fact was that the system of plural voting must be looked at by itself. Was it or was it not a just and proper part of our Parliamentary system? He believed that the more it was examined the more it would be found to be unjust, and that it could not be defended in public, as it was hateful to the people of this country. He therefore commended the measure to the House, with a feeling that it would put an end to a gross anomaly without being in any way a disfranchising measure, inasmuch as every man who was entitled to a vote would continue to have one, although he would be unable in future to vote more than once at the General Election. If gentlemen opposite considered that the Government were leaving an anomaly unremedied in giving people the option of voting in more than one place he would invite their assistance to get rid of it. He would conclude by saying that in making this proposal to the House the Government were endeavouring to put an end to a public scandal, and to bring about a state of things which would he believed be grateful to the bulk of the country.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover) said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down if he had convinced the House of nothing else must have convinced it that he believed implicitly in the cry of "One Man One Vote." He (Mr. Wyndham) had listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speech with amazement, because the right hon. Gentleman seemed still to be in blissful unconsciousness of the nature of the challenge which had been thrown down to him by his opponents. The one thing of which the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly certain was that the question of plural voting must be considered by itself. With all deference to the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. Wyndham) felt obliged to contradict every single statement made in the right hon. Gentleman's peroration. The question of plural voting must be considered as a part of this Bill. Since this Bill purported to be an amendment of the Act of 1885, it must be considered as an amendment of that Act, and, this being a Reform Bill, it must be considered, as all Reform Bills had been, with regard to the state of public business and to the condition of affairs which a reform of the electorate might influence. There had been during the discussion a great deal of interesting academic speculation on the part of the right hon. Gentleman and those who had preceded him, directed to show that one man should only have the right of casting one vote. These gentlemen had based their arguments upon the consideration of the question from the point of view of the right of the individual. They had asked whether the Opposition thought that because a man was rich he ought to have two votes, or because he was intelligent or educated he ought to have more than one vote. The Opposition believed none of these things, but they said that never until now had a Reform Bill been based solely upon the right of the individual. In the Act of 1885 consideration was given to the local colour of the constituencies which were to be represented. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the fact that there were constituencies in England and Scotland which were over-represented. These, however, were not oversights, but were deliberately agreed to by the late Prime Minister (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), because he was determined to preserve to a certain extent the local element in representative institutions. In the speech in which he (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) introduced the Bill of 1885 he said that it was necessary to deliberately over-represent certain parts of Ireland and Scotland unless the voices of their Representatives were to be drowned and swamped by the voices of such industrial centres as Lancashire and London. And now the colleague of the late Prime Minister happened upon this mare's nest, and told the House that there had been oversights in the Bill which he and his colleagues passed. The right hon. Gentleman said the House could not deal with the question of redistribution, because the present scheme was only 10 years old, but the plural vote was also 10 years old, as it was deliberately maintained in the Act of 1885 by the late Prime Minister. The aim and object of the late Prime Minister in 1885 was to give to every householder in the Kingdom a vote. It was said that the representation of Ireland could not be reduced without a breach of faith towards that country, inasmuch as 100 members were guaranteed to Ireland under the Act of Union. If this were so it seemed to him that the House was in rather an unfortunate position, inasmuch as, while it could not rescind the part of that contract which acted unfairly as against English constituencies, that very part of the contract was to be used with the object of obtaining the rescinding of the contract altogether. They were, therefore, travelling in a vicious circle. They were not to object to anything in the Act which injured England, but at the same time the provisions of that Act which not only favoured England but safeguarded the truest interests of the Empire were to be swept away by the very over-representation which they were not allowed to touch. As the right hon. Gentleman and other speakers had indignantly repudiated any imputation of motives he would not impute any motive to him or his colleagues, but he was bound to say that when first he read the Bill he was tempted to think that it was merely an electoral device. Of course, he was now ready to change his opinion, as he had been convinced by the guileless innocence of the right hon. Gentleman who last addressed the House that he implicitly believed in the formula of "One Man One Vote." When one saw that anything had been by human ingenuity endowed with an eccentric shape, one was driven to think that that shape had been imparted to it in order to effect some special purpose. He was reading the other day a passage in which a learned professor pointed out that the corkscrew and the theatre had assumed their peculiar shapes in order to meet the needs of two varieties of human beings —namely, the thirsty and the pleasure-loving. He thought that in this case hon. Members might trace some connection between form and function; they might guess at the cause which had originated this measure, and assume that it had been framed in order to meet the peculiar needs of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. His chief objection to the Bill arose from the fact that he was there as an English Member. He represented English constituents—men who, he must own, had taken as a rule very little interest in academic discussions upon the fastidious perfection of the political machine, but who cared about this Bill a great deal. They viewed the Bill, both on account of the occasion of its introduction and on account of its character, with not a little jealousy and not a little alarm. The occasion of the introduction of the Bill was peculiar. Reform Bills had, for the most part, been brought in in the ripe old age of administrators who could point back to many good deeds done; but this Reform Bill was brought in after an unprecedented period of legislative sterility, following upon a period of profuse electoral promise. He did not suppose that such hopes were ever raised as were raised before the last General Election, and that so many hopes were ever disappointed as had been disappointed since that Election.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Law Library, Four Courts (Ireland) Bill,

County Councils Association (Scotland) Expenses Bill,

North Berwick Provisional Order Bill.

### QUARTER SESSIONS BILL [*Lords*]. (No. 162.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

### SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 189.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

### DERELICT VESSELS (REPORTS) BILL. (No. 87.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

### RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (EASINGWOLD RAILWAY, &C.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," relating to the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Rates and Charges of the Easingwold Railway Company, the Crieff and Comrie Railway Company, the East and West Yorkshire Union Railway Company, the Harrow and Stanmore Railway Company, the Shortlands and Nunhead Railway Company, the South Clare Railways Company (Limited), and the Stocksbridge Railway Company, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Mr. Mundella.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 206.]

*Mr. Wyndham*

### HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Alexander Cross, Bill to amend the Law relating to Heritable Securities in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alexander Cross, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Mains, Mr. Hozier, and Mr. Caldwell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 207.]

### POLICE (SLAUGHTER OF INJURED ANIMALS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Banbury, Bill to enable Police Constables to cause Horses and certain other animals when mortally or seriously injured to be slaughtered, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Banbury, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Tritton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 208.]

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NOTIFICATION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Bolitho, Bill to extend the operation of "The Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act, 1889," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Bolitho, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, and Mr. Mallock.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 209.]

### COMMON JURORS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Parker, Bill for the remuneration of Common Jurors, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Parker, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. Pease, and Colonel Cotton-Jodrell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 210.]

### LICENSING LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Tritton, Bill to amend the Licensing Laws, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Tritton, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, and Sir William Houldsworth.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 211.]

### BUILDING SOCIETIES (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend the Law relating to Building Societies, ordered to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Sir Charles Hall, Mr. Byles, and Mr. Picton.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 212.]

### ELECTIONS (SECOND BALLOT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Holland, Bill providing for a Second Ballot in cases where no candidate has received a majority of the recorded votes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Holland, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir James Kitson, and Mr. Schwann.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 213.]

### SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Anstruther, Bill for the better regulation of Sea Fisheries in Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Crombie, Sir Herbert Maxwell, and Mr. Renshaw.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 214.]

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, 2nd May 1894.*

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## MOTION.

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### COMMITTEES (ASCENSION DAY).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Committees do not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. W. **ALLEN** (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said, he rose to oppose the Motion. Last year the Government had a majority of 70 in favour of it, largely composed of their own supporters and hon. Gentlemen opposite. Gentlemen opposite had given as their reason for supporting the Motion that Ascension Day was a feast of the Christian Church, and that they desired to attend Divine service instead of sitting in the Committee Rooms. A number of those gentlemen, however, had not gone to Church, but had spent the morning in roaming through the Park. Some hon. Members who voted for the Motion last year opposed it on other occasions when their Party was not in power. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, he believed, was one of those. Another reason for opposing the Motion was that it would inflict great hardship on those who had Bills before Committees, and who had to keep their witnesses in town and to pay them and the counsel engaged. He saw no reason why, because the Christian Church used in the past to observe this feast, litigants before the Select Committees should have a fine imposed upon them.

The **CHANCELLOR** of the **EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I have thought it right to put this Motion upon the Paper. It is a Motion that is usually made in this House. Last year, as the hon. Member has said, it was accepted by a large majority, whence I conclude that a majority are still in favour of it. I see no reason why the Government or the House should depart from the opinion that they have expressed on this subject in the past. As my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian stated last year, the Motion is not proposed in any sense as a Party Resolution. It is entirely a matter for hon. Members to decide whether they desire to adhere to the former practice of the House. In these circumstances, I leave the matter in the hands of the House to decide.

Mr. **TOMLINSON** (Preston) said that, in regard to the suggestion that witnesses and others would be at a disadvantage if the Motion were accepted, there was no doubt that Committees could prolong their sittings if they chose.

Mr. **HENEAGE** (Great Grimsby) said, he objected to the Motion, but not altogether on the same grounds as the hon. Member (Mr. Allen). He objected to it on the ground that it was illogical and unnecessary. Committees could sit if they chose, and could use their own discretion in the matter. There was no necessity to impose on the promoters of Private Bills unnecessary expense to which they might object. He should certainly oppose the Motion now and on every other occasion.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 71; Noes 45.—(Division List, No. 37.)

## ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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### CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—(No. 11.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. **BARTLEY** (Islington, N.), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, regretted that it was not associated with some Member more influential than himself. Although he was a firm adherent of the Church of England, the measure might better have been brought forward by one more connected with Church work. This measure, like the Bill of last year dealing with this subject, had been approved by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bench of Bishops, and had been practically adopted by the Houses of Convocation. The present measure had also been approved by both Houses of Laymen. It had, therefore, received the support of both clergy and laity. He would not go into questions connected with ecclesiastical law or involving technical matters, complex even to lawyers, but would confine himself to the broad principles of the measure. There were three main ideas in the Bill, and they would commend themselves to all interested not only in the welfare of the Church and in its extended usefulness in this country and elsewhere, but in the advancement of the Christian religion. First of all, it was to stop the sale by public auction of next presentations to Church livings; secondly, it was to stop the traffic in Church livings; and, thirdly, it was to give to the Bishop of the diocese some power, though not very great, to prevent improper persons from being instituted to any benefice. Those three main propositions could not be objected to by anyone who was in any way interested in the welfare of the Church of England. These were all proverbial points which had been discussed many times, and as to which, practically speaking, both laity and clergy agreed something ought to be done; and he did not think that their Nonconformist friends could possibly object to those reforms in the Church. The Nonconformists, though not agreeing with Churchmen on points of discipline or otherwise, were interested in the spread of sound Christian instruction in this country, and would therefore agree that these great blots on the Church system should be done away with. First, with regard to stopping sales by auction of Church livings, that, of course, was not absolutely correct—it was the next presentation; but not being a lawyer he could not see much practical difference, for it really was the sale of the living. In the first clause of the Bill it was provided that it should not be lawful to sell or offer for sale by public auction any right of patronage. It seemed unnecessary to use arguments to enforce that principle, though he could cite a great number of instances showing the abuse and scandal of public advertisements in connection with the sale of next presentations. One was, "A charming preferment for a man fond of sports and country life;" price, with early possession, £2,000; another, "An attractive living, not far from a fashionable seaside resort;" and a third, which seemed the worst of all, where there was "A population of 1,500 persons, but the congregation small." A large price was asked, as there would not be much to do. Such a state of things as this was an absolute scandal to the nation. Church patronage could not be said to be really property in the ordinary sense of the term; it was a sacred trust which should be exercised only for the welfare of the persons in the district to which the living belonged. Such advertisements were revolting, and all would agree that the whole system should be done away with. The remaining portion of the clause abolished the system of trafficking in livings, did away with the system of encumbering livings with charges, and so on. There was to be no charge on the incumbent, and no transfer unless it was a transfer of the whole right of the living, and certain other restrictions were dealt with which at present prevented many livings from becoming available for the good of the district in which they were situated. One of the common systems of trafficking was that part of the price might remain on mortgage of the advowson, and this system of trafficking ought to be abolished as a great evil. In some instances the traffic was so flagrant that the vendor of the living actually covenanted, on receiving the price for next presentation, that he would pay interest until the living became vacant by the death of the incumbent. He appealed to Churchmen as well as Dissenters to support these proposals. Communications had been sent him complaining that the patrons would be ruined. That was strange language to use in connection with such matters. The third main branch of the Bill was that the Bishop of the diocese should obtain some power to prevent improper persons from being presented to any benefice; but the power which the Bill conferred in this respect was hedged about with considerable safeguards. First of all, the Bishop had to ascertain that the patron had complied with the provisions of the Act; next, the Bishop, before he instituted any presentee to a new living, was asked to find out what that person had been doing since he was ordained, and it was proposed that he should receive testimonials from three beneficed clergymen in favour of the applicant. Those could not be considered unreasonable precautions before a man had a Church living handed over to him. The Bishop must next give a month's notice to the Churchwardens of the parish that he intended to institute such a person, and, during the time allotted, any parishioner might, in writing, give reasons against his being instituted. No one, he thought, would say that this was an unreasonable precaution. The Bill further provided that if on certain definite grounds the Bishop considered that the person so proposed to be instituted would be injurious to the interests of the parish, then he had not only a right, but was instructed to refuse to institute him. Many people seemed to be afraid of this provision. But what were the grounds on which the Bishop would act in refusing to institute to a benefice? The Bill enumerated six reasons for which a Bishop could refuse to institute a clergyman to a living. They were—that the clergyman had not been ordained one year, that he was unfit through physical or mental infirmity, that he was in great pecuniary difficulties, that he had been guilty of misconduct or neglect of duty in offices which he had previously filled, that he was leading an evil life, or that there was a grave scandal or evil report affecting his moral conduct. To these six grounds for a Bishop's intervention he did not think that any Churchman or Dissenter could object. To provide against the possible abuse of power thus put in a Bishop's hands a right of appeal was given to patron and presentee, so that when they were dissatisfied with the reason given for a Bishop's refusal to institute they could bring the case before the Archbishop. Where the refusal occurred in an Archbishop's diocese a special court of appeal composed of three Bishops would be constituted. So that there was every protection against tyranny, and the danger was not that the Bishops would act unreasonably or unfairly, but that for the sake of peace, quietness, and kindness they would not act as firmly as they should. These were the chief provisions of the measure, which some might think ought to go even further than it did in the direction of reform. He was himself in favour of preventing any person from receiving any consideration at all for the exercise of Church patronage, and no doubt in ordinary employments it would be held to be an outrageous thing to sell patronage. If any hon. Member found that a friend, recommending to him a secretary or clerk, had stipulated that he should receive a large payment out of the man's salary as commission for having got him the appointment, it would be considered almost a criminal offence. He agreed with the Lord Chancellor, who said in the House of Lords last year that there was something repugnant in the mere idea of the sale of a sacred trust. This Bill, then, he admitted, was a comparatively humble one; nevertheless, it would do a great deal to check great abuses, and therefore he warmly recommended it for acceptance not only to Churchmen, but also to Dissenters, who were, he felt sure, convinced that it was most desirable in these days to put an end to all forms of scandal connected with religion. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

*Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) moved—

> "That this House declines to proceed further with a Bill which, while recognising the sale of Ecclesiastical Patronage in the future, deprives the present holders of ecclesiastical property, without compensation, of rights to which they are by law entitled."

He said, that he did not ask the House to assert that the sale of ecclesiastical patronage was a right in respect of which compensation ought in all circumstances to be paid. What he did ask them to say was that by a Bill which recognised, in a most mischievous manner, the sale of ecclesiastical patronage it was not just to take away existing rights of sale without compensation. He could quite understand any ecclesiastical or social reformer coming to the House and saying this was an unholy traffic in a sacred trust — that, in the words of Shakespeare, "The offence is rank and smells to Heaven," and that it should be swept away altogether, without talking about compensation for a right which ought never to have existed in this world. When the Bill of the Home Secretary for disestablishing the Welsh Church was introduced, and the right hon. Gentleman said that Welsh patrons would only be entitled to one year's compensation for the loss of their patronage, a visible shudder of horror passed through the Opposition Benches. But if it was unjust to take away patronage whilst giving one year's compensation, how much more unjust must it be to take away the right of sale of patronage without giving any compensation at all? What would the Bill take away? The right of the sale of patronage, the only right which in the case of patronage had any pecuniary value. Now he came to the Bill itself, which he did not think had been quite accurately described. The hon. Member for North Islington had stated several grounds for the acceptance of it, one of which was that it was favourably regarded by the majority of the Bishops. That statement was very possibly correct, because, if the Bill passed, their rights of patronage would be considerably increased. But that was no sufficient reason for passing the Bill; neither did he consider the fact that Convocation supported it was sufficient reason, because Convocation was a purely clerical body based upon imperfect representation. The House of Laymen had been referred to, but this was not a matter which could be decided by any body merely representing the Church. The hon. Member for Islington described the Bill as one calculated to promote the spread of the Christian religion, but apparently that desirable end was to be attained by preventing the sale of livings by public auction. He could not see how they would spread the Christian religion by doing in private what they were ashamed to do in public; if it were a right thing to do, it should be done in public; if it were wrong, it should be prohibited altogether. The hon. Member had described this as a Bill to prohibit the sale of the next presentation by public auction, but what it really did was to prohibit the sale of any patronage by public auction, and to prohibit altogether the sale of the next presentation. But why was the sale of the next presentation worse than the sale of any other presentation? If it were wrong, if it were immoral, and if it were contrary to public policy that the right of presenting the succession to a benefice should be made the subject of barter, what did it matter whether the sale was of one appointment or of an indefinite number? He should have thought that the sale of the whole advowson was the worse of the two transactions. The truth was, that this was a tinkering Bill designed to hide and not to prevent scandals. There was a most curious point connected with the sale of advowsons, for the second sub-section of the clause provided for the transfer of the right of presentation, and laid it down that the right should not be exercised for two years after the transfer. What was the meaning of that? Why was it more sinful to exercise it within two years of the sale than after two years? The chance of what might happen in two years made it a gambling transaction. No doubt it was discreditable to the Church that there should be speculations on the life of an incumbent, and why Parliament should step in and permit and encourage such practices he could not understand. Again, he did not see why these rights of patronage should be transferred to the Bishop of the diocese. Bishops, he supposed, were considered public patrons, but public rights were often put to very private uses. A worthy old Bishop once put this question, the correct answer to which he had not yet been able to determine. He asked why an excellent young man should be prevented from having a good living merely because he happened to be his son-in-law. He invited the attention of the House to that problem. Probably the only practicable answer was to take the Bishop out of the way of temptation. It was all very well to try and prevent by any Act of Parliament a clergyman from buying a living, but he believed that one might just as well try to prevent by legislation a clergyman running race-horses. He would run them, if so minded, in another person's name. There were persons he knew who believed that as soon as a man was admitted a priest a peculiar virtue at once attached itself to him, and that he became peculiarly fitted for the exercise of certain functions. He would not now discuss that point, but he could not understand the effort of the operation being postponed for a year. He would also ask why, if hon. Members thought that any patronage to livings was bad, and it had undoubtedly caused many evils, did they not bring in a measure which would entirely prohibit it, instead of a half-and-half measure such as the present Bill was? The fact was, that the Bill dealt with a great subject in a narrow spirit. Let them remove these evils from the Church, for by so doing they might weaken the cry for disestablishment. It was not sufficient merely to withdraw these evils and abuses from the cognisance of that public opinion, which was, after all, the most wholesome purifier. One very remarkable provision of the Bill was that which dealt with the Law of Libel. He did not pretend to say how far that provision would alter the existing law. As he understood the Law of Libel, it was not so much the statement which was privileged as the occasion, and the privilege depended upon the use made of the occasion. He hardly thought that a Bill dealing with Church patronage was the proper place in which to modify the Law of Libel, and to restrict the civil rights of Her Majesty's subjects. He would tell the House what he believed to be the proper remedies for the existing state of things. He believed the proper remedy for these evils was to leave the Church free and unfettered by legislation, and let her manage at her own discretion her own affairs. He was astonished that the Church Party, from whom apparently this Bill proceeded, should be willing to stand by such a measure, and by doing so they had turned themselves into nothing less, in his opinion, than a "confiscation party." As hon. Members, however, had taken up their present position, he presumed that henceforth they would not denounce the Government up and down the country for proposing to pay Welsh patrons insufficient compensation. If the Bill would apply any cure to existing evils, and if it would in any way promote the efficiency of the Church, he would be the last to oppose it; but inasmuch as he believed its effect would be to drive abuses into dark corners, he was bound to protest against it as an insufficient and mischievous attempt to deal with a great question, and he therefore moved the Amendment standing in his name.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to second.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words,

"this House declines to proceed further with a Bill which, while recognising the sale of Ecclesiastical Patronage in the future, deprives the present holders of ecclesiastical property, without compensation, of rights to which they are by law entitled,"—(*Mr. Paul,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he was sorry he could not agree with the speech of the hon. Member for South Edinburgh. The hon. Member had admitted that the state of the law in regard to patronage was by no means satisfactory, and Churchmen agreed that there was much which needed reform in that regard. He as a Churchman regarded this Bill as a reasonable attempt to put a stop to patronage scandals, and on that ground he asked the House to read it a second time. He could not understand the assertion of the hon. Member for South Edinburgh that the Bill was a paltry tinkering attempt to deal with the scandals of the Church; but as that was answered with anticipation by the Mover of the Bill, he thought it unnecessary for him to dwell upon that. He looked on the Bill as admitting the right of parishioners to have some voice in the nomination and selection of their ministers. This was the first time that such a right had been recognised in a Bill; and while he was prepared to admit that the recognition had not been made in the most satisfactory manner, he thought that in Committee it would be possible to introduce some desirable Amendments, and therefore he was prepared to support the Bill. Some objection might reasonably be raised to the power which it was proposed to place in the hands of Bishops in regard to presentations, because although they were willing as Churchmen to trust those dignitaries, they were not altogether satisfied with the manner in which they were chosen. They were nominated by the Crown, and were the nominees of a Leader of a political Party, and it was quite possible men might be raised to the office who were not in full sympathy with the Church itself. Still, the Bill would remove obvious evils. It was a gross indecency to see in the papers advertisements like those read by the hon. Member for North Islington. He would like to see all these sales stopped, and in Committee on the Bill he should feel it his duty to endeavour to carry an Amendment by making it unlawful to sell or offer for sale any living either by auction or otherwise. He would also be willing to give compensation to patrons for the loss of their rights. It seemed to him that the property of the Church was very unevenly distributed. The best incomes were attached to those livings in which there was very little work to do, and consequently in those cases the patronage was a very valuable property. As the Bill would remove glaring scandals, he hoped the House, by reading it a second time, would do something towards purging the Church of England—an act for which all Churchmen should be grateful.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester) said, the hon. Member for South Edinburgh had dealt with a very important subject in a most superficial manner, and while he was grateful to the hon. Member for Maldon for the support he had given to the Bill, he was unable altogether to concur in the grounds on which that support was tendered. He did not share the views expressed against lay patronage. There was a great deal to be said for it. It enabled the Church, which embraced a great many varieties of opinion agreeing in the main but differing in detail, to be widely representative, and he did not think that an Ecclesiastical Committee would be able to exercise patronage in a more satisfactory manner. Therefore, they ought not lightly on a Wednesday afternoon to doom the system of lay patronage. He denied that the Bill was in any sense confiscatory, and he believed that if they abolished altogether the sale of advowsons it would produce evil. Was it not far better when the patron of a certain living sold his property in the neighbourhood of that living and went to live in a distant part of the country, he should be enabled to part at the same time with his right of patronage? It often happened that a patron was unfortunate and lost his money; he would not in that case be able adequately to perform his duties, and it would be far better to get rid of him.

SIR W. LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Why?

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE said, it might be a temptation to him to present the living to an unsuitable man. A Committee of the House of Lords, a Committee of the House of Commons, and a Royal Commission had all agreed that the sale of the next presentation never did any good. The House would understand that he made the broad distinction that the sale of an advowson was one thing and the sale of the presentation another. To take away the right of selling an advowson would be a confiscatory measure. He did not think the Member for Edinburgh had studied the law with regard to next presentations, or made himself acquainted with past legislation. As a matter of fact, the sale of the next presentation was an evasion of that which had been the law of England ever since the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The House must be aware that it was not possible for a clergyman to buy the next presentation to present it to himself. It was not possible for any person to give a sum of money to secure the presentation to a particular individual. All this revealed a spirit in the law of England that it was contrary to the law that any one should give money to procure a spiritual charge. Persons engaged in this disgraceful traffic knew that they were sailing as near the wind as they could. The Bill, therefore, was not of a confiscatory character; what they proposed was to interpret what was the spirit of the law. They knew that the meaning of presentation was the presentation of the clerk to the Bishop for approval. It is not intended to seriously alter the law in this respect, but they proposed to give to the Bishop the right institution where a clerk was obviously unfit to take the charge. At present the Bishop was unable to refuse institution. Technically he had the power, but practically he had not the power. They proposed to make the power effective, so that where a

Bishop found in a proposed incumbent any of the faults enumerated in the Bill he should be able to refuse institution, and he thought that was a perfectly just proposal. In case there was any feeling that injustice had been done there would be an appeal to the Archbishop, which was to be heard in open Court. The cases of death or infirmity were also provided for. He hoped the House would give the Bill a Second Reading, because it embodied what was really an earnest attempt to remedy abuses in the Church system. He trusted the House would not think it worth while to make the cruel retort that the Church was corrupt. It did not follow that the whole Church was corrupt because very occasionally some of its members were corrupt. The remedies which they proposed in the Bill were directed against evil-doers, and would not affect the well-doers. He repeated that this was an earnest and anxious effort in the direction of reform. They desired to avoid confiscation, and wished to do something to help the Church of England. They did nor believe it was necessary to wait for disestablishment. It was quite evident from experience that the whole sense of the community — of Episcopalians and Nonconformists, of Conservatives, Liberals, and Radicals—was against a factitious opposition to a Bill which merely had for its object the better government of the Church of England and the benefit of religion generally. If objections were pointed out—if it were shown that the Bill went too far in protecting the rights of property—that it gave too much or gave too little authority to the rulers of the Church—he, for one, should be only too willing to consider any Amendment that might be moved; but, in the hope that it would not be treated as a species of partisan legislation, he confidently commended it to the House.

*MR. BIRRELL (Fife, W.) said, so long as the Anglican Church was content to submit its sores to such a tribunal as that House, he maintained it was the duty of every Member of Parliament, however strong his opinions might be as to the tenets and doctrines of the Church of England, to give his earnest support to any proposals to remedy grievances and abuses as much as possible. He, therefore, should not think of taking upon himself the responsibility of voting against the Second Reading of the Bill; on the contrary, he deemed it a pleasure to give it his support. But those who were alive to the abuses of patronage and of the sale of livings might be excused if they called attention to the lame and limping manner in which this Bill dealt with the subject. So far as the views of his hon. Friend (Mr. Paul) were concerned, he thought he was obviously right when he pointed out that this Bill did confiscate certain rights at present enjoyed without giving any compensation at all. He did not understand that his hon. Friend regretted that that should be so. On the contrary, he was sure he thought with him that such rights were not proper subjects for compensation. The noble Lord might be right in saying that the sale of next presentations was contrary to the spirit of the law, but he could not deny that the right of sale was exercised every day, and this, therefore, was a confiscatory measure, although the right confiscated might not be a proper subject for compensation. This was only one of many rights of property, including rights of landlords, which had grown up contrary to the spirit of the law, and the title to which could not be made good if you went back three or four hundred years. The fact remained that people undoubtedly did make money by the sale of next presentations, and that right was interfered with by this Bill without a halfpenny of compensation being given. He thought with regard to that point there was a distinction when you were disestablishing a Church and taking away from patrons the right and privilege of nominating to the cure of souls, because, in that case, it might be fairly said compensation ought to be paid for interference with the rights of property. But, so far as the Church of England was concerned, no one was now proposing to interfere with any such rights; there was no interference with the privilege of nominating to the cure of souls, a right which patrons would continue to enjoy as heretofore. He regretted that the promoters of the Bill did not have the courage to say that, so far at all events as next presentations were concerned, there should be no sale of them at all—in fact, that no money should be made out of them. Had that been done he did not think that any case could have been made out for compensation, and they would have satisfied not only Nonconformists but also most members of the Church itself. The fact was, there had been a great heightening of feeling on this subject, and what used not to shock people 20 years ago did so now. He remembered that when he began practice as a conveyancer, it was the ordinary form in a settlement, when a young cleric was engaged to be married to a lady of property, to authorise the Trustees to apply some portion of her property for the purpose of purchasing a living to which her husband was to be presented; and he usually inserted a clause to that effect, taking it from the common text-books. The last time he did so was two or three years ago, when he received from the bridegroom to whom the draft was submitted so violent a letter that he had never since had the courage to insert the clause in any such settlement. That showed that things which used to pass muster without thought or consideration years ago now excited great antipathy and strong feeling. He rejoiced that that should be so, but he could not help advising the promoters of this Bill to take more courage and go to the full length of their convictions as faithful members of the Church of England. So far as the general measure was concerned, he must say he entirely agreed with the criticisms to which it had been exposed. Its spirit was intensely cowardly in reference to public auctions and advertisements, as though the minds of Churchmen were more affected by the publicity of the scandals than by the existence of the scandals themselves. The shame was not in the publicity which these evils obtained, but in their existence; not in the fact that tender consciences were wounded by the perusal of advertisements offering livings for sale, for that was no justification for coming to Parliament upon the question. He should advise the promoters of the Bill to so amend it in Committee that the sale of next presentations would be stopped altogether, and not merely by public auction. He put it with all gravity to the supporters of the Bill whether there was not something cowardly in driving sales of this description into the private parlours of the clerical agents, simply in order to avoid what was considered to be a public scandal, while the traffic was allowed to remain the same as before. It seemed to him that if they had the true interests of the Church at heart they should rather maintain alive these public auctions, in order that pious Churchmen might never forget what was going on in their midst, or cease to agitate for reform. He agreed with the noble Lord as to the value of lay patronage. It was most desirable in the interests of the Church of England that patronage should not become more and more vested in the hands of Public Bodies or officials. Lay patronage, to his mind, was better than that of Bishops or Public Bodies, and he was not at all sure that it was desirable to transfer to the Bishop of the diocese the increased patronage which he would possess under the Bill. He was not sure which was the worse patron, the Crown or a Bishop; therefore, he hesitated to substitute the Crown or the Lord Chancellor for the Bishop. It seemed to him that the subject required careful consideration with the view of determining who was the proper person to be invested with patronage. He did not know that it was desirable that presentees should be dependent for induction upon a testimonial from three beneficed clergymen, countersigned by a Bishop. If they required a condition preliminary of that sort, he should like to see a little lay opinion introduced. He did not object to the three beneficed clergymen, but he confessed he thought the opinion of the laity was at least as valuable. No doubt the power of the Bishops would be increased by the Bill, and, so far as that increased power was to be used for the purpose of keeping out persons obviously unfitted for the discharge of certain duties, he did not think that any sensible man could object to it. But he thought that some of the language of the Bill was vague, and would require careful consideration in Committee. He supported the measure, but, at the same time, he did not think it reflected great credit on the courage of its promoters.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that as one of the promoters of the Bill, he could not refrain from thanking the House for the very favourable consideration which had been shown to it. He would point out that the Bill had not only received the sanction and authority of Convocation, of both the Northern and Southern Provinces, and of the Houses of Laymen of both Canterbury and York, but also of other authorities which, in the minds of some Members, would probably possess greater weight—a Committee of the House of Lords which sat in 1874, a Committee of the House of Commons which examined the matter in the year 1884, and a Royal Commission which dealt with it in 1879. The effect of these Reports was practically to recommend the substance of the present Bill, and many of the details were identically the same as those recommended by those bodies. He could not agree with the hon. Members who spoke of the Bill as one of confiscation. He could not admit that the right of patronage was an unqualified right. On the contrary, it was qualified in the most severe manner by conditions involved and implied. The Committee of the House of Lords in 1874 spoke in these words of patronage—

> "We are of opinion that all legislation affecting Church patronage should proceed upon the principle that such patronage partakes of the nature of a trust to be exercised for the spiritual benefit of the parishioners, and that whatever rights of property originally attached, or in process of time have attached to patronage, must always be regarded with reference to the application of this principle."

One of the objects of the Bill was to obtain publicity, and to prevent those private, hole-and-corner proceedings which were a greater scandal to the Church than the open sale of livings. There was a provision in the Bill to the effect that all transfers be recorded in the diocesan records, which he believed were open to the public so that every transfer would be well known to all whom it might concern. Another provision declared that no transfer should be valid which did not transfer the whole rights of the transferor. If the sole right was a next presentation that right might be transferred, as otherwise confiscation was necessarily the result. Another remark that had been made was that the Bishops had an increase of power under this Bill. The question to consider was not whether the Bishops had an increase of power, but whether that increase tended to the good of the Church. He could not conceive anything more painful to a Bishop than to be compelled to institute a gentleman whom he knew to be unfit to exercise the great duties of an incumbent's office. The Bishops had full power to act in the gross cases referred to by previous speakers. One hon. Member had said that the removal of these evils would not lead to a spread of Christianity. He entirely differed from that hon. Gentleman. Whether the Church of England were viewed in its purely legal aspect or regarded as a great Christian Society, everything in it that caused scandal must militate against the spread of Christianity, and everything that tended to remove scandal must tend to the spread of Christianity. As regarded sales by auction, he could not help thinking that some of the advertisements which had produced scandal were really flourishes of auctioneers. He could not believe that any person who bought a living would for a moment be induced to buy by such attractions as had been quoted. He was of opinion that the standard of clerical duty was fast rising, and that few clergymen could now be found who would take a living because it happened to be near a meet of hounds or near a fashionable watering place. As to the suggested abolition of lay patrons, he believed that the consolidation of patronage in a few hands would be a great evil to the Church. The Committee of 1874 spoke of the importance of lay patronage as securing variety and independence, and helping to continue that liberality and width of thought which characterised the clergy of the Church of England. He believed lay patronage to be a source of strength to the Church. Some hon. Members complained of the period during which a man must have been in priest's orders being limited to one year. He did not say that one year was sufficient, but he thought that one year's experience as a priest, combined with a year's experience as a deacon, would be a great advantage in many cases. If the period were extended too much the result must be to inflict hardship upon the clergy without conferring any benefit on the Church. He did not contend that the Bill did everything that ought to be done, but it was a step, and in an old country like ours we must move one step at a time. The Church of England was the only Religious Body which came before the House, as it were, living in a glass case. All that was done in the Church was known, and when evils were found to prevail in the Church an endeavour was made to remove them. He rejoiced to find amongst gentlemen opposite a feeling that if the Church of England were to exist it ought to be left free to do good work during the continuance of its existence as an Established Church. The efficiency of the Church, whatever may be its fate, was intimately blended with the efficiency of religious teaching in this country. He was quite sure that the scandals which the Bill endeavoured to remove were a hindrance to the progress of Christianity, and that if the Bill passed religion would abound more in those parishes which would be affected by it than it had hitherto done. He hoped, therefore, that the House would consent to the Second Reading.

Mr. PERKS (Lincolnshire, Louth) cordially agreed with the last speaker, that the cause of moral reform and true religion must be materially advanced by the removal from the institutions of the Church of England of such practices as those that had been brought before the attention of the House in the course of the discussion. Hon. Members had just been reminded that this was an old country which moved slowly. Its Legislature apparently moved still more slowly. As long ago as 1870 Lord Cross, then a private Member of the House of Commons, brought in a Bill for the removal of these very abuses, and in 1877, when Home Secretary, in answer to Mr. Leatham, he stated that, in his judgment, the abuses ought to be at once swept away. Inasmuch as the Conservative Party had since that important declaration been for 12 years in Office, commanding in each House a very considerable majority, one almost wondered how it was that no serious attempt had been made by the laity of the Church of England to induce the House to deal with the question. It was not because they had failed to receive the support of the Nonconformists in the House of Commons because some of the most serious and protracted efforts to remove these abuses had emanated from Nonconformist Members. They were sometimes told that the Nonconformists of England acted upon jealousy, and nothing but jealousy, of the Church of England; but he thought there was no Nonconformist who was anxious for the spread of religion amongst them who would not gladly assist in the removal of these most extraordinary conditions. What one was particularly struck with was that the measure was such a halting, such a half-hearted and feeble attempt to deal with a notorious abuse. He agreed with very much of what the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) had said, that the impression produced on one's mind was that the supporters and framers of the Bill were anxious to still the public conscience and to rather hide than remove these abuses; because it was manifest that unless they prohibited the sale of advowsons, not merely by public auction, but prohibited the sale of them altogether, they did not go to the root of the evil. What was there to prevent a man privately buying an advowson to-day, presenting it to-morrow to himself, and then selling the advowson? There was nothing to prevent it under the Bill, which simply prohibited the sale of next presentations. Another defect in the Bill, he thought, was its failure to give the parishioners some sort of effective control over the appointment of the clergy. Until they entrusted the parishioners with some such powers as were given to Scotchmen under the Scotch Patronage Act of 1874 they would fail to grapple effectually with this difficulty. But he only rose for the purpose of saying he thought it was the duty of Nonconformists in this House to recognise this as a sincere, though he believed a feeble, effort to reform a long-standing abuse, and on that ground he hoped that every Dissenter would render it his support, so that the Bill might be duly considered in Committee, and amended in a way conducive to true religious progress.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Louth (Mr. Perks); there ought not to be any feeling of jealousy between the Nonconformists and the Church of England, and he felt quite satisfied that if the hon. Member had had as much to do with the Church of England as he (Sir R. Webster) had had to do with Nonconforming Bodies, they would both be able to appreciate the good that was being done by the various bodies. He did not believe that anyone who had spoken to-day thought there was any feeling of jealousy on the part of the Church and those in other denominations. The statements they had to meet had not certainly been of the character that demanded any lengthened reply. He had listened to the speech of the hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) with great pleasure, but he thought the hon. Member had not had time to consider the provisions of the Bill. The hon. Member said they were simply trying to drive an evil underground, and that the effect of the step they were taking would only be to prevent sales by auction. He did not speak as a promoter of the Bill, but on behalf of those who had considered it: and he thought that if the hon. Member had made this subject a study for the last few years, he would have seen that it was in connection with the sales by auction that the abuses were most closely allied. Hon. Members who believed the result of this Bill would be to drive underground the abuses at present before the public, had not, he thought, noticed what were the provisions in the Bill, and what would be its results when the clauses were put in operation. The Bill, for the first time in history, provided for the public registration of all transfers, and thus removed one of the difficulties which had always existed in regard to such matters. If the hon. Gentleman had studied the subject he would have known that it was in connection with sales by auction that scandals generally arose. It was, however, impossible to deal with the whole question of patronage without at the same time grappling with the exceedingly difficult subject of compensation. That was a subject which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would hardly come to consider at present, and the funds of the Church were not in such a condition as to enable her to deal with it. He believed that the Bill would be productive of much benefit to the Church, but some hon. Members complained that it did not go far enough. Those who had considered the question felt that it would be impossible and improper to introduce into the Bill any complete change as to the way in which patronage should be exercised. It would in all probability have promoted a discussion which would have had the effect of preventing the possibility of the Bill becoming law. While the promoters could not recognise anything in the nature of an election of an incumbent or minister, they had recognised the principle that the parishioners, not any parishioner, but five parishioners—which was a number that would secure responsibility—should have the right of presenting to the Bishop a statement showing that a clergyman had become incapacitated from any cause for the due performance of his duties. When the provisions of this Bill came to be considered, he thought even the hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) would be inclined somewhat to change the expressions he had thought fit to use. He did not know with what motive the hon. Member spoke of this as a peddling and tinkering Bill; but when the hon. Member came to see that every speaker who followed him had said this was an honest attempt to remove grievances that had been found to exist for a long time in the Church, and when those who were themselves possessors of a considerable amount of this patronage—he referred at present to the House of Lords—had been the first to initiate schemes and proposals for the removal of the evils, he thought if the hon. Member considered the question from that point of view he would be of opinion that though the Bill did not go so far as the hon. Member and some others would like to see, at the same time it would remove a large proportion of those real breaches of the law, though they were not in a legal sense breaches of the law, which so many religious men of all denominations deplored, and which so many Members had expressed their willingness to find a remedy for. There were other provisions in the Bill, but they were mere matters for Committee. He hoped the House, which had received the Bill with such a fair temper, would give it a Second Reading, and that having done so its clauses would be considered, not in any controversial spirit, so that they might be able to say this Session had passed a measure and done something to remove an evil which all Churchmen and all Religious Nonconforming Bodies agreed ought to be dealt with.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to say—I am not disposed in any way to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill. The principles on which this Bill are founded are those which I, for one, and Members on this side of the House have always accepted—namely, that the Established Church has relations with Parliament which entitles Parliament to deal with the Church's property in a way in which it could not deal with other property. Of course, the question of next presentation involves as much property as any other. It is not contrary to the law; otherwise it would be restricted. It is legal property, in which the person who has it has a right to deal as much as with any other property he possesses. When we were dealing with purchase in the Army, the transaction was simply contrary to the law, and we gave compensation. Here you are taking away property confirmed by the law and you give no compensation. Had we done that we should have been called confiscators and robbers. We do not return the compliment; we do not call those who bring in this Bill confiscators and robbers. On the contrary, we hail them with satisfaction as public benefactors, and I hope they will take the same course when dealing with Welsh disestablishment. I am glad that hon. Gentlemen opposite do recognise that Church property does stand in a different position to any other property in the country in respect to the right of Parliament to deal with it. I agree very much with the hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul), that this is—I will not use any uncomplimentary epithet, otherwise I would call it a sham Bill—but it is a Bill which does not deal with the persons who are to dispense these spiritual offices. You may not sell the next presentation to a living, but you may sell the advowson and anyone may buy them. The hon. Gentleman said just now the House of Lords did not object to this Bill. No, because it safeguards all the House of Lords cares about, which is the right of presentation; they do not want to sell; it is part of the appanage of a great estate. A poor man having a living may want to sell the next presentation, but a rich man does not, and this Bill would not prevent him giving it to a younger son or to a neighbour who agrees with him on religious and political matters, and he secures to himself a spiritual oasis around his estate, taking care that all the parsons shall be in political and spiritual union with himself. That is really what is preserved by this Bill. The rich man buys a great estate, whether he belongs to an old family or has become one of the *nouveaux riches*, and acquires all these rights of spiritual gifts. He would say, "What a nice thing for my son Robert!" or "What a nice thing for my friend!" All that the Bill does not reform. It does not profess to reform the question of patronage at all. Upon the subject of lay patronage I have formed a strong opinion. I have always thought that lay patronage, if properly administered, was a good thing, and I should be sorry to see it episcopalised, for it would be the very worst thing that could happen to allow the Bishops to hold all the power of patronage in the Church. But when you speak of lay patronage as a thing to be purchased in the market, as it is now, and as it will be after your Bill has passed, that, in my opinion, is not the best way of introducing reform into this country. The people who have the best right to a voice in this matter are the congregations, and no system is of any value whatever that allows an individual, merely because he happens to be the proprietor of the soil, to dispose of the spiritual wants of the people who live upon the estate he has purchased in the open market. In my opinion, the loss of that power would not weaken, but would strengthen the Church. Where is the growth of the strength and influence of the Church in this country? It is not mainly in the country parishes, but in the great towns, because in the great towns it is a voluntary Church, and the clergyman depends upon his personal influence with his congregation. In the country the clergyman may be entirely out of harmony with the disposition, the sentiments, and the opinion of the parishioners, and when that is so how can you be surprised there is not that sympathy on the part of the people that there ought to be? Those are the real things which lay at the root of patronage, and a Bill which professes to deal with patronage and does not recognise questions of that character is necessarily imperfect and inefficient. What I complain of in this Bill is that it does not deal with the interests it ought to deal with. It covers up and perpetuates the monopolies of the rich landlord, the rich possessor of the soil. This Bill is made in his interests, the whole of which it safeguards, while it taxes the interests of inferior men who might, by their circumstances, be compelled to make money out of the patronage. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite says this is a very small matter. Yes, it is a very small matter, but the principle is a very great matter. I remember a maxim I was taught in my childhood which ran—"It is a wicked thing to steal a pin, much more a sin to steal a greater thing." The Convocation does not appear to think it a sin to steal the pin, therefore the whole monopoly of the great and rich man is to be preserved, and this small area of patronage in possession of the poor man is to be taken away. The hon. and learned Gentleman is naturally in favour of a proposal which increases his own authority and diminishes the authority of other people. As I have said before, this Bill includes the germ of much larger reforms. It includes the principle of dealing for the public advantage with property of this description, and on that ground I accept the Bill. It goes a very little way, and does remove what I think everybody will admit is a great scandal, and in that respect also I am prepared to accept the Bill; but I must join with my hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh in condemnation of the Bill as anything like an adequate or sufficient dealing with a very great matter, and I regard it as the letting out of water which will unquestionably hereafter flow in a much stronger stream.

*Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield) congratulated the members of the Church of England on the fact that, after the lapse of eight years, they were now again asking Parliament to deal with the flagrant evils arising out of the present system of Church patronage. It was 24 years ago since Mr. (now Lord) Cross brought in a measure on the subject, and that period had witnessed a growth of activity, of liberality and of religious feeling, in the Church which made it wonderful that the present evil system had been tolerated until now. The Royal Commission on the subject reported in 1879; but seven years passed before the Primate brought in a Bill to give any effect to the recommendations of the Commission, and then five years more were allowed to pass before the introduction of another measure. During the 24 years only two Members of that House had dealt with the subject; one of these being the lamented Mr. Stanhope, and the other, Mr. Leatham, a member of the Liberation Society, which was supposed by some to have a vested interest in abuses in the Church. There were various reasons for this long delay. The time of Parliament was absorbed by secular matters. Churchmen were divided in opinion. The House of Lords comprised numerous Church patrons, and, lastly, the whole question was indissolubly connected with the rights of property and the existence of an Established Church. While agreeing with what had been said as to the feeble character of the measure, he must admit that it went further and was stronger than any previous measure on the subject. Among its good points was the abolition of donative livings. Perhaps very few Members knew exactly what a donative was, and he would therefore give the House a description contained in a Charge, in 1875, of the Bishop of Peterborough, afterwards Archbishop of York.

> "There are 100 patrons in England, not presumably better or wiser than other patrons, who have the right to keep the parishes in their gift as long as they please without a pastor; who, when he is appointed, need produce no evidence that he is even in holy orders, no testimonial as to his character, and who may buy from one of these patrons the right, without check, hindrance, or so much as a question from any human being, to enter upon a cure of souls, and who, moreover, by that purchase, may have been enabled to complete some nefarious transaction respecting some other piece of Church preferment of which he may be the owner."

It was not surprising that the promoters of the Bill should wish to convert donatives into presentative benefices; the only wonder was that they should have tolerated such a scandal so long. Another point of the Bill, of which he could speak approvingly, was the absence of any proposal to compensate patrons for the diminished money value of their rights, which would result from the passing of the Bill. It would be a most useful precedent when they came to disestablish the Church. The hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) had spoken of the main principles of the Bill, but he (Mr. Williams) could not find them. Let not the House suppose that this was a measure for putting an end to the traffic in Church livings; on the contrary, it was intended to continue the traffic, but on new conditions, and by abating some of its worst scandals. It simply drove the traffic away from Tokenhouse Yard into the office of that well-known character, the clerical agent. The Bill also exempted two classes of livings from its operations—namely, the livings included in the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Acts, and those in the gift of landowners who owned 100 acres in the parish. These might still be sold by auction, and might continue to be associated with the evils which the Bill professed to cure. There were two questions which he had a right to put to the framers of the Bill. Did they really consider that the right of appointing ministers of religion ought not to be bought and sold? If they did, why did they not apply the principle thoroughly and consistently in the present measure? Or, if they defended the merchandise in men's souls, why should not the transaction be open and aboveboard, instead of being shrouded in secrecy? The results of secrecy had been described by witnesses examined by the Royal Commission. Mr. Lee, the secretary to the Bishops, said that it was difficult for them to prevent corrupt presentations, because "where there is anything irregular it is kept most carefully, not only from the Bishop, but from his officers." Mr. Bridges also said that the clerical agents

> "Insist on the necessity of strict privacy, as vital to any arrangements of that kind."

The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) had pointed to the clause in the Bill requiring the registration of transfers and transmissions; but it did not, and could not, provide for the registration of the disreputable transactions which might have preceded a transfer. An attempt had been made to draw a distinction between the sale of advowsons and the sale of next presentations; but there were Churchmen who frankly admitted that no such distinction could properly be drawn. In the Debate on the Patronage Bill of 1886 Mr. Childers, a Churchman, who was then Home Secretary, said—

> "The conclusion to be drawn is, that the sale of livings ought to be done away with altogether. There is no middle course."

In the same Debate another staunch Churchman, the late Mr. Raikes, said—

> "Whatever provisions you may make against the sale of next presentations, the ingenuity of the lawyers will get round them. As long as one person has a commodity to sell, and another wishes to buy, it is not in the power of an Act of Parliament absolutely to prohibit the sale."

The framers of this Bill hoped to prevent illegal transactions in future by framing new declarations; but there was abundant evidence to show the utter futility of such safeguards. Among the witnesses examined by the Royal Commission was Mr. Emery Stark, a well-known clerical agent, and this was part of his cross-examination by the Bishop of Peterborough—

> "Mr. Stark—Three-fourths of my transactions are with immediate possession, and, strictly speaking, they are nearly all illegal.
>
> Bishop—Knowing it to be illegal, these clerical patrons ask you to help them to break the law?
>
> Mr. Stark—Decidedly; and the matter is completed by solicitors of the highest standing in the country.
>
> Bishop—The clergyman knows what the meaning of Simony is in that declaration; he knows that it is a legal term which means contrary to the Law of Simony?
>
> Mr. Stark—Yes.
>
> Bishop—Knowing that, these moral clergymen, who first of all ask you to break the law, then take an oath that they have not broken the law?
>
> Mr. Stark—Yes."

After such evidence, he ventured to say that the new declarations contained in the Bill would be as ineffective to bind the traffickers in livings as were the green withes by which it was sought to bind Samson. There was one great omission in the Bill which had not yet been noticed. It made no attempt to get rid of immoral patrons. The Bishop already quoted said years ago that

> "The very greatest scoundrel in England may be a patron, and his extreme immorality is no bar in law to his acting as patron,"

and that was true to-day. He (Mr. Williams) could name three persons who within the last two or three years had figured most disgracefully in the Law Courts, who had as many as 63 livings in their gift. By means of the lately passed Clergy Discipline Act, the Church had sought to get rid of "black sheep" among the clergy; but the black sheep among Church patrons were left undisturbed. He had to ask himself what was his duty in regard to the Second Reading of this Bill. He was willing to afford to its promoters the opportunity for making it an effective measure, and that could be done by a very few Amendments which would absolutely abolish the sale of livings. If they refused to avail themselves of that opportunity, there would be a clear course before him at a future stage of the measure. He, however, would be wanting in frankness if he did not add that he had no hope that the great and admitted evils of the patronage system would ever be effectually dealt with while the Church continued to be established by law. That was not his opinion alone; it was shared by many sagacious Churchmen. Writing some years ago, *The Guardian* said—

> "It deserves to be again and again said, and urged, that the abuses of private patronage are especially and emphatically due to the connection of Church and State."

That was still true, and he reminded Churchmen who were now passionately protesting against measures of disestablishment that if they succeeded they would be perpetuating evils which they all deplored. The only Christian Church in the world, so far as he knew, which allowed the right of appointing ministers of religion to be bought and sold was the Church of England, and that was because of its establishment. Let it cease to be established, and the system, with all its iniquities, would disappear, as the snow of the night melts in the sunshine of the morning. The Church must first be liberated, and then it would be purified.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure.

## LABOUR MINISTER BILL.—(No. 25.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. ERNEST SPENCER (West Bromwich) moved the Second Reading of this Bill, the object of which he explained was to establish a Ministry of Labour, to be presided over by a Minister to be called the Labour Minister. These proposals were in no way of a Party character, and had found supporters sitting in all parts of the House, not to mention the great support it had received outdoors at various Conferences, &c. The central idea of the Bill was that the time had now arrived for the union or amalgamation of the various Departments dealing with labour matters and questions, or administering laws relating to or concerning labour, under a Minister of the Crown responsible to Parliament. This proposal had secured the very serious consideration of the Labour Commission, which had been sitting for some years past, and he saw from the newspapers that the subject-matter of this Bill had been dealt with by both the Majority and the Minority Report. The House was not in possession of these Reports, but for the purpose of his argument he would venture to rely on the accuracy of the advance copies which had appeared in the public prints. The Majority Report, unlike the Minority, did not recommend the appointment of a Ministry and Minister of Labour, but it went a long way in this direction by advising the extension of the Labour Bureau of the Board of Trade. The proposals contained in the Bill were not in any way antagonistic to the labour or scope of that Department. The old Labour Bureau was once described by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade as possessing a staff so insufficient that it was only a one-horse machine. The right hon. Gentleman rechristened the Bureau a Department, and undoubtedly considerable increased its usefulness, and it now very creditably collected, digested, and published statistical and other information bearing on questions relating to the condition of labour. It also possessed a much more efficient staff, including correspondents in various large towns, and published an organ termed *The Labour Gazette.* But admitting and giving credit for all this, the Department was still very far removed from what, in his opinion, a Department, or, as he preferred to call it, a Ministry of Labour should be when they considered the growing importance of what were called labour questions, especially when they remembered what America, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium had done in the same direction, but more particularly America, where labour questions and matters and labour legislation and the administration of laws relating to labour had since 1884 been centralised in what they termed the National Ministry of Labour, which, in addition to comprising a Central Department, had 26 Labour Bureaus in the various States all collecting and sifting facts and figures dealing with the social, sanitary, and material condition of the great labouring population, and so paving the way for such reforms as should be found practicable and necessary in an age when no individual country could afford to stand still, and must take part in the great march of progress. He now referred to the recommendations of the Minority Report of the Labour Commission, which was the production of the labour members or labour element of the Commission, and was signed by well known and recognised friends of labour, like Mr. M. Austin, M.P., Mr. J. Mawdsley, and Mr. Tom Mann; and he found that his Bill, although drafted three years ago, and it had been before the House on two previous occasions, almost exactly carried out more or less efficiently the very recommendations of that portion of such Report which recommended that a Ministry or Department of Labour should be formed, consisting of the present Factory and Mines Department of the Home Office, the Labour Bureau of the Board of Trade, and the Registry of Friendly Societies; and the Report went on to recommend that such Ministry should be under the charge of a Minister, who should be responsible for all the branches of administration specially charged with labour questions and matters, and stated that the increasing prominence of industrial problems and the growing participation in politics of the wage-earning class led them to look with favour upon the appointment of such a Minister. Upon perusal it would be seen that these recommendations were embodied in the Bill, with one exception, and that was that the Bill was silent as to whether the Labour Minister should be in the Cabinet, whilst the Report recommended that he should be. This was a distinction which it would be easy to remedy if the House thought fit, and could be very well left to its judgment and decision to be dealt with in the Committee stage, if the House in its discretion should agree to the Second Reading of the Bill. He might say that the constitution of the Board forming the Ministry was exactly framed on that of the Board of Agriculture, which he had taken as a model in this respect, and the formal portions of the Bill were taken from that measure; whilst what might be termed the inquiring clause were taken word from word from the Act under which the American Ministry had successfully worked since 1884. Personally, he would have preferred to do without this Board, and in including it in the Bill he was being governed by precedent. In addition to the matters and duties which he had mentioned, powers were taken in the Bill to investigate the following matters:—

> "The causes of, and facts relating to, controversies and disputes between employers and *employés* as they may occur, and which may tend to interfere with or affect the welfare of the community, and report thereon to Parliament; to constitute a National Arbitration Board, to which all controversies and disputes between employers and *employés* may, by the mutual consent of the parties interested, be referred for arbitrament under rules and regulations to be made by the Ministry; to make or aid in making such inquiries, and collect or aid in collecting such information as the Ministry may deem important in relation to emigration and also foreign pauper immigration, and the bearing of the latter on the conditions and circumstances of the native labour market; to make, or aid in making, inquiries, and collect, or aid in collecting information relating to State assisted old age pensions for the industrial classes, and report thereon to Parliament; to establish a system of Reports by which, at intervals of not less than two years, the general conditions of production and other important conditions relating to the leading industries of the country may be learnt; to obtain from

other countries such information upon the various subjects committed to it as the Ministry may deem desirable; and, lastly, to undertake the inspection of and reporting upon any schools which are not public elementary schools, and in which technical instruction, practical or scientific, is given in any matter connected with industrial subjects."

It might be very fairly asked, if such a Ministry was formed, would the taxpayer get his money's worth; and in reply to this query he might say that he thought he would—first of all, by having important labour questions dealt with ably, vigorously, and energetically, and in a way consistent with the best interests of the labouring classes and the community generally; and, secondly, by doing away with costly, spasmodic, and necessarily imperfect inquiries by means of Select Committees and Royal Commissions. On the question of probable cost, it was stated that the American National Ministry of Labour costs £30,000 per annum; but he took it that the major portion of this sum was spent in equipping and providing for the 26 Provincial Labour Bureaux. It was said that the recent Labour Commission cost over £50,000, so by doing away with these Committees and Commissions an economy would be effected which would materially assist in paying for the new Ministry or Department. In conclusion, he was of opinion it would be greatly to the benefit of the wage-earner, the capitalist, the social reformer, and the legislator that the administration of all laws relating to labour should be centralised in one Department under a responsible Minister, and that all labour matters, teeming as they do with important, not to say gigantic, consequences to all classes, should be carefully and impartially investigated by such a Department, with permanent and skilled helpers, rather than by Committees and Commissions composed to a certain extent of partizans, faddists, and persons with conflicting interests. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. WILSON LLOYD (Wednesbury) said, he had much pleasure in seconding the Motion, for he felt that among all the burning questions of the day none was of more importance to the country or more extensive in its character than the labour question. He hoped the Government would see their way to appoint a special Minister to take entire charge of this matter, as it was impossible for any Government Department that now existed to devote to it the time that it demanded. He was sure the Home Department, which was overwhelmed with work, would be glad to be relieved of all questions affecting labour; and as those questions were numerous and urgent, a special Minister was required to deal with them in a proper manner. He believed it was the want of a Minister to give his entire attention to questions affecting labour which alone had permitted pauper immigration to go on so long without any notice being taken of it by the Government. Nothing did so much to injure the working classes by flooding our labour market with pauper aliens, and he trusted that steps would be taken to prevent the country from being overcrowded with people who came here utterly incapacitated from fulfilling the requirements of civilised society. For all these reasons he was anxious to see the appointment of a Labour Ministry.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ernest Spencer.*)

*COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, in support of the Second Reading of the Bill, that no one could deny that both political Parties when in power desired to do the best they could to advance the interests of labour; but at the present time the Home Office and the Board of Trade, which had charge of labour matters, had more business of another kind than they could well get through, and the result was that labour interests were neglected. The Labour Department of the Board of Trade might possibly do something to solve the difficulty, but he had very little hope that it would. The President of the Board of Trade took great pride to himself for having extended the Labour Department. Certainly some of the Labour Correspondents through the country furnished useful Reports; but there seemed to be no determination on the part of the Government to take action on those Reports, and the mere making of Reports, without anything being done with them, was absolutely useless. At the present time labour was in a very precarious condition indeed. Large numbers of the industrial classes in the constituency which he represented were out of employment, and had been so for a very long time. He had constantly called the attention of the President of the Board of Trade to the matter; but the right hon. Gentleman—who, he admitted, was overburdened with duties—seemed quite unable to deal with it. He therefore thought that if there was a Minister of Labour, able to devote his whole time and attention to the question of the employment of the people, great advantage would ensue. He was sure that his hon. Friend who had brought in the Bill did not consider it so perfect that he would not gladly accept any practical Amendments that might be brought forward. He was sure, too, that the President of the Board of Trade, with his experience in industrial affairs, would agree with him that a special Minister should be appointed to deal efficiently and effectually with the urgent and important questions affecting labour, and he therefore trusted that the Government would see their way to give a favourable answer to the Motion then before the House.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, that the three Conservative Members who had consecutively addressed the House in support of the Bill did not seem to him to have made out a sufficient case to recommend this large new departure to the favourable consideration of the House. The Mover of the Bill seemed to have the assent of the House in what he said with regard to the Labour Bureau, and if it were only intended, or mainly intended, by the Bill to strengthen the Labour Department of the Board of Trade, he was sure they would all support the Bill. The Labour Department had done immense public service already, and the service it was rendering was greatly increasing; and he was sure it was the wish of the House and the desire of the constituencies in the country that the hands of that Department should be strengthened, and that the Treasury should give a favourable answer to applications for the money necessary for its needs. But while he was anxious to see the Labour Department strengthened and its statistical side improved and brought up to the level of similar institutions in America and in our own colonies, he thought it was a long stride indeed from that point to the proposal of the Bill to set up a separate and distinct Labour Ministry. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill had said that the proposed Ministry was framed upon the model of the Board of Agriculture. He doubted that the Board of Agriculture had been so unqualified a success, in the opinion of Members of the House, as to make them desire to see the creation of a new Department founded upon that example. Then the hon. Member had constructed a Board very curiously composed, for on it Scotland was represented and not Ireland, and, indeed, the whole constitution of the Board was unsatisfactory. This was simply a proposal for the creation of a new sham Board, because if it was brought into existence it would no more hold a meeting than the existing Boards ever did. Perhaps the President of the Board of Trade would tell them how often his Board had met and what was the character of its deliberations. He remembered that just at the time when some trades were asking for the creation of a Minister of Commerce, the people of France were asking for the creation of a Board of Trade rather than of a Minister of Commerce, as they considered that a Board of Trade, similar to the Board of Trade in England, would do everything needed for commerce, having been under the impression that the Board of Trade was a consultative Department which met from time to time. He believed that if this Ministry of Labour were created, it would be, like the Board of Agriculture, an unnecessary Department. The Mover of the Bill had said that the points this Ministry ought to deal with were arbitration, emigration, alien immigration, and State-aided pensions. As to arbitration, there were Government proposals before the House, and he should not be in order in discussing them; but he would point out that many Trades Unionists, who were in favour of the creation of a Ministry of Labour, doubted the wisdom of the proposals with regard to arbitration. Mr. Mawdsley, a Conservative Trades Unionist of great and well-deserved influence amongst the working classes, had said that an Arbitration Board was unnecessary in the case of well-organised trades, while in the case of other trades—trades in an inferior state of organisation—such a Board would bring great influence to bear in favour of capital as against labour which would have to go to the wall. The House had already debated the question of pauper immigration, and had strongly favoured the view that it was not desirable to interfere with this supposed evil at all. Again, to place State old-age pensions in the hands of a Government Department was to declare beforehand that it was to State old-age pensions they must resort, although it was very probable that the Old Age Commission would report against that view, and would advise that the matter be left to Local Authorities. Finally, the hon. Member who introduced the Bill had said that if his proposals were adopted the taxpayer would get his money's worth. It was on that point he principally took issue with the hon. Member. He thought that we already had too many Ministers, and he denied that the taxpayer would get any reward for the fresh salaries involved in the creation of a fresh Department. This country had already enlarged beyond all experience the number of Government Departments represented in Parliament, and he asked the House of Commons to pause before it again entered on the path of increasing the number of gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Bench. It was said that labour matters were attended to chiefly by the Home Office, and that the Home Office was overgorged with work. He was pretty well acquainted with the work of the Home Office; but while no one could doubt the enormous weight and responsibility of the functions discharged by the Home Secretary, he was bound to say, and he thought the Home Secretary would agree with him, that the Home Office was not necessarily an overworked Department. There was no doubt, however, that there was a good deal of confusion as to the respective duties, with regard to labour, of the Home Office and the Board of Trade; but that could be set right, and ought to be set right, in a different way from the way proposed in the Bill. There was undoubtedly a case for the redistribution of work between the great Departments of the State; but there was no case whatever for the creation of another new Ministry. There was no parallel in the world for anything approaching the number of Ministers who now sat in the House of Commons. There were, he believed, 38 or 39 of them, besides their Secretaries, and as there were really too many and not too few of them, the House should not embark on any scheme for the creation of another new Ministry. It was true that the proposed Minister of Labour would not necessarily have a seat in the Cabinet, according to the Bill, but undoubtedly the pressure of public opinion, which had caused the introduction of the Bill, and might cause the passing of the Bill some day, would be strong enough eventually to get the Minister of Labour into the Cabinet. Now, the Cabinet was altogether too large for the efficient doing of the business of Government, and he believed the modern tendency to create larger and larger Cabinets would result in making it impossible for great subjects of national importance to be well-considered and properly dealt with. There was this, however, to be said in favour of the Bill—it was perhaps the strongest argument that could be advanced in its interest—that the Minority Report of the Labour Commission—signed by the hon. Member for West Limerick, than whom no man was more trusted by the Trades Unionists, Mr. Mawdsley, to whom he had already referred, and Mr. Tom Mann, well-known in connection with the Independent Labour Party—was likely to contain a proposal for the creation of a Ministry of Labour. His belief was that those gentlemen were wrong; but undoubtedly their opinion that the creation of a Labour Minister would tend to lessen the evils which they all deplored was entitled to weight, and it led him to put forward his views with hesitation. In any case, the creation of any more new Ministries ought to be accompanied by a complete review of the boundaries of work between the different Government Departments. He had hoped at one time that the Ridley Commission would have conducted such an inquiry. The Commission touched the fringe of the question, but did not enter upon it.

There was certainly room for a redistribution of the work of the various Members of the Government, and the consideration of how far the great Departments ought or ought not to be represented in the Cabinet. In this country we were getting into the habit of doing work through the heads of the great Departments, with seats in the Cabinet, that ought to be done by the permanent officials, as in other countries. Of course, it was right to have the Ministers in the House, but it was not necessary to have that minute sub-division of work proposed by schemes such as that proposed in the present Bill. If there were to be any extension of the system, he submitted that the creation of new Ministries ought to be accompanied by a complete review of the boundaries of work between the different Government Departments. Again, if the Minister of Labour was to be created, there should be created a definite personal Minister rather than a sham Board. He put forward, with great deference, the reasons which led him to think that the House of Commons should pause before entering on the consideration of the Bill. At the present time labour was more effectually represented in the House of Commons than it had been in the past. The President of the Board of Trade had entered into a course of improvement with regard to the Labour Department, and in doing so had been supported by the whole country. The Home Secretary had personally taken a more active interest in labour questions than any Home Secretary in the past had done. There might be ground for some rearrangement of the duties of the respective Departments; but he asked the House to pause before it tried to solve that problem by the creation of a fresh Ministry, in addition to the too many that they had at present.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** (Paddington, S.): I had not intended to make any remarks on this Bill until I glanced over its contents and saw that it was one of the most remarkable measures that have ever been introduced into the House, even on a Wednesday afternoon. Looking over the names on the back of the Bill one is not much impressed with the legislative faculties of those associated with the measure. I is a Bill to establish a new Minister in a country that is overridden with Ministers. Nor is he to be a pigmy Minister. He is to have functions as great as those of any other Minister of State. I object to the creation of a Minister of Agriculture, and I hold that agriculture has been under great disadvantages in severing itself from the Privy Council and representation in the Cabinet. It would have been better to have made the Lord President of the Council the Minister for Agriculture, and then agriculture would always have been represented in the Cabinet. The Vice President of the Council would have been Minister of Education, and certainly a Minister asking Parliament for £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 a year ought to have a Department of his own. Now, I pass to the Labour Minister. First of all, I would say we have got a Labour Minister in the President of the Board of Trade, who discharges those duties with satisfaction so far as they deal with labour matters. To substitute a new and probably a worse Department is one of the most eccentric proposals I ever heard. What are to be the powers and the staff of the new Department? First, there is to be a Board. That is the regular plan. When you want to conceal a really powerful Minister, you hide him under a Board. The Board will consist of the Lord President of the Council, Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State—so that the Home Secretary will have an opportunity of sitting on it—the First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary for Scotland,

> "and such other persons (if any) as Her Majesty the Queen may, from time to time, think fit to appoint during Her Majesty's pleasure."

That is the Board. Now we come to the Minister. The Bill says—

> "It shall be lawful for Her Majesty the Queen, from time to time, to appoint any Member of the Privy Council to be President of the Ministry during Her Majesty's pleasure."

And what are the powers of this Minister to be? He is to take over

> "the powers and duties vested in Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department for the regulation and administration of the laws relating to mines and factories and the appointment of Inspectors under the Acts mentioned in Part I. of the Schedule"

of the Bill. Could anyone conceive a more audacious proposal? This Minister, who nobody ever dreamed of before, is to divest the Home Office of most important duties. Those duties are at present performed with the utmost care and efficiency, and with the general confidence of the public. The staff that carries out those duties must be very large. What about the cost? Are you going to spend money on an effete and an inexperienced Minister, when you have already the best Minister you can get at a reasonably economical rate? But the authors of the Bill do not stop there—and surely legislation of this sort ought not to be allowed in the House of Commons. The duties include

"the powers and duties vested in the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury relating to Friendly Societies and aids to thrifts and providence among the industrial classes in all Acts mentioned in Part II. of the Schedule."

The Friendly Societies and aids to thrift and providence! I suppose that means the savings banks, for I cannot conceive any more powerful aid to thrift and providence than the savings banks. These are all to be transferred to the new Minister. Savings banks are now admirably managed by the Post Office, and Friendly Societies are also under Government supervision. A pretty large staff would be required in the proposed Department to deal with these things. Then the Bill goes on to say—and I hope this does not weary the House—

"The Ministry of Labour shall also undertake the collection and preparation of useful information and statistical details of subjects connected with labour in the most general and comprehensive sense of the word, in relation to the industrial, commercial, social, educational, and sanitary conditions of the industrial classes, and specially to capital, the hours and conditions of labour, the earnings of labouring men and women, with the view of promoting their material, intellectual, and moral prosperity."

Did anybody ever read such a sub-clause as that? But what is the Minister of Labour asked to do in addition to that? He is asked to undertake a task which has baffled the wisest heads in the country—

"The Ministry of Labour shall also constitute a National Arbitration Board, to which all controversies and disputes between employers and *employés* may, by the mutual consent of the parties interested, be referred for arbitrament under Rules and Regulations to be made by the Ministry."

Was there ever a more wild and lunatic scheme for bringing employers and labourers together? I would draw the attention of the Minister of Education to this provision—

"The Ministry of Labour may undertake the inspection of and reporting upon any schools which are not public elementary schools, and in which technical instruction, practical or scientific, is given in any matter connected with industrial subjects, and the aiding of any such school which admits such inspection, and in the judgment of the Ministry is qualified to receive such aid, and the aiding of any system of lectures connected with industrial subjects, and the inspection of and reporting on any examination in such subjects."

Surely this would enlarge the expenses of the Education Department, and bring them we do not know where. I cannot find out what is to be the status of this new Minister. He is to be a Privy Councillor; but not being acquainted with the Act alluded to in the Bill, I do not know whether he is to take office without being elected. Clause 7 says—

"The office of President of the Ministry of Labour shall not render the person holding the same incapable of being elected to, or sitting or voting as a Member of, the Commons House of Parliament."

I should think not. The clause dealing with the appointment of the staff is also very vague. It says—

"The Ministry of Labour may from time to time appoint a secretary and such officers and servants as the Ministry may, with the sanction of the Treasury, determine."

And it goes on—

"There shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament to the President, if not one of the Officers of State above-mentioned, nor any other Officer of State receiving a salary,' and to the secretary, officers, and servants of the Board, such salaries or remuneration as the Treasury may from time to time determine. All expenses incurred by the Ministry of Labour in the execution of their duties under this Act, to such amount as may be sanctioned by the Treasury, shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament."

I see one of the promoters of the measure behind me, and I ask him in all seriousness, Who drew this Bill? I think, on reflection, its authors must see that it is not a Bill the House is likely to assent to; indeed, I cannot imagine how they ever conceived that the House would be likely even to discuss it. A Department which would have to take over a large part of the functions of the Treasury, and which would have to discharge the most varied functions in all matters connected with labour, would necessarily have to be one of the largest in point of numbers, and would necessarily impose a large burden on the finances of the country, and the result would be that it would discharge duties which are being adequately performed at the present moment. And that is the notion of legislation which comes before Parliament in this extraordinary Session—1894!

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I do not propose to say any more than a few words on this Bill, which has suffered very severely already at the hands of the noble Lord opposite. I think, however, I ought briefly to indicate to the House the position the Government take up in connection with the question. I am not one of those who think that, if we had to begin afresh our administrative arrangements, there would be anything unreasonable in establishing a Department that might be called a Ministry of Labour. From an abstract view, and even from that of administrative convenience, there might be advantages in collecting together in the hands of a single Department some of the functions now discharged by various public offices. The truth is, in this and other matters we have advanced in a haphazard and piecemeal fashion. As in the case of education—though the Department is now one of our most important Ministries, and is responsible to Parliament for an expenditure of £6,000,000 annually—we began in a tentative fashion extending the area of administration of the Minister from time to time, so in the matter of labour. The Home Office and the Board of Trade have had from time to time new duties in this direction cast on them by Parliament. After all, we must deal with this as practical men, and I have not heard any argument to show that any substantial inconvenience has resulted from the present arrangements. To take my own Department—and I am the person most interested—the Bill proposes to transfer the whole powers of the Secretary of State for the Home Department in relation to mines and factories. Why should they be taken away from the Home Department? Not unless a case can be made out that the powers are either badly or insufficiently used. Has anyone attempted to make out such a case? I speak from only two years' experience in the Home Office, but I have personally paid close attention to the duties of the Home Office relating to mines and factories, and I submit that, though there may be shortcomings, largely due to the imperfections of the legislation we have to administer, there is no reason to think that any one of those drawbacks can be substantially met by the mere chance of another Minister calling himself by another name, with the same staff and with the same powers as I have at the Home Office discharging these duties. The promoters of the Bill then proceed to cut and carve in a similar way at almost all the leading Departments of the State. They propose to take something from the Treasury, from the Board of Trade, from the Foreign Office, and from the Education Department, and to aggregate them in a new Department. To lay the foundation for such a case they must make out either maladministration or inefficient administration. No attempt has been made to establish such a case. The Board of Agriculture has involved the public in considerable unnecessary expenditure by taking away from the Privy Council duties that were adequately performed by that Department. This is a more ambitious, a more gratuitous, and ill-founded design than that of the Ministry of Agriculture or of the Secretary for Scotland. In these circumstances, though not out of sympathy with the idea that a Ministry of Labour might be a useful Department in an administrative system, I agree with the noble Lord that new Departments are not to be multiplied without necessity, and I ask the promoters of the Bill to be content with having ventilated the subject, and not to divide the House.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside) asked whether the Bill was really in Order, seeing that the Money Clauses would arise only in Committee of Ways and Means?

*MR. SPEAKER : I must point out that the discussion of the Bill on this stage is not irregular; but, as the Bill would involve a charge on the Revenue, the provisions imposing those charges are printed in italics, and technically form no part of the Bill. The Chairman in Committee would not put any questions on those clauses unless the charges to be imposed by them were previously sanctioned in a Money Committee, and the Motion setting up that Committee could not be put unless a Minister of the Crown signified the Queen's recommendation to such charges being incurred. As I understand, the Government are not prepared to signify this recommendation, and the Debate, therefore, is of the nature of an academical discussion, as no effect can be given to it ; but the Debate is not irregular.

Question put, and negatived.

## MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS (1887 AND 1891) AMENDMENT (CUTLERY) BILL.

(No. 98.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) said, the Bill was promoted for the purposing of meeting a grievance felt in the cutlery trade. It was known widely that the result of there being no legislation of this kind was that frauds were constantly being committed upon the hand-cutters of files. Files which were hand-cut were considered to be superior to files which were machine-cut ; but no person who was not an expert could tell the difference between files that were machine-cut and files that were hand-cut. Large orders were given for hand-cut files, and files which were machine-cut were supplied in their stead. The price of machine-cut files was lower than the price of hand-cut files. This measure had the support of the Trades Unions of the country. The file-cutters in the large towns had petitioned the House in favour of passing the Bill, and inasmuch as the Bill had been brought in by himself, and was backed by his hon. Friend and Colleague the Member for the Hallam Division, the House would see that it was in no sense of a partisan character. It was a modest Bill ; it would inflict no damage on any human creature, and had been brought in in the interests of honest trade, and to prevent hand file-cutters being constantly defrauded by the sale of machine as hand-cut files. Its provisions technically agreed with the recommendation of the Trades Council. It provided that the files which were machine-cut should be stamped as such, so that if anyone wanted to have a hand-cut file he would be able to know it from a machine-cut file.

*COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT joined with his hon. Friend and Colleague in saying that there was a very strong feeling on this subject throughout the five divisions of Sheffield. He was sorry his hon. Friend the Member for the Hallam Division, who took great interest in this matter, was not in the House, but he could hardly have thought that the Bill would be reached so soon, or else he would have been present. He hoped the Bill would have the support of his right hon. Colleague the President of the Board of Trade, and that it would be read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

## FOREIGN GOODS (MARK OF ORIGIN) BILL.—(No. 61.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, it was printed on the first day of the Session.

MR. MUNDELLA : I have never seen it.

*COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT said, that was exactly the answer the right hon. Gentleman gave him last Session. For several months the right hon. Gentleman and he sat upon a Committee, which went fully into the matter, and now the right hon. Gentleman told him he knew nothing about the Bill.

MR. MUNDELLA: I have not seen the Bill.

*COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT said, it was the same Bill that had been introduced every Session since 1888. That showed that the right hon. Gentleman was unable to deal with the vast mass of business that came before his Department. The Bill was very simple in its character, and was designed to remedy a defect in the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887. No one would dispute the good effects of that Act, which was passed by the last Administration, and was promoted largely by the Cutlers' Company of Sheffield, assisted by the Federated Trades Council. Goods could come into this country unmarked, though they might be made in German prisons, and he would presently put into the hands of the President of the Board of Trade the card of an agent who announced himself as an agent for German prison-made brushes. He was going about selling goods in this country, and, when called to task, he said—"It is your own fault, because you allow goods to come in here without any indication of their origin." This Bill had nothing to do with Protection or Free Trade; it was simply that the purchasers of goods in this country might know from what source they came. All they wanted was that the purchasers and consumers in this country should have the option of choosing between English and foreign made articles. Let them choose whichever they liked, but do not let them pay a higher price in the belief that they were paying for an article produced in this country if it were not. The Chairman of the Board of Customs stated to the Select Committee of 1890 that he believed it to be the case that a considerable quantity of goods were imported which were subsequently falsely marked. It was also clear that in Scotland German cutlery was being sold at English prices, and under English names and designations, as was abundantly proved before the Select Committee appointed by the late Government in 1890 by a leading Labour Representative of Sheffield. The right hon. Gentleman would perhaps tell them that these cases of false trade description were provided for under the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887. But the difficulty was in proving the offences, and, as a matter of fact, only 17 prosecutions had been instituted during the last two years, with exceedingly moderate results as to convictions. This was a matter which had been warmly discussed at Trades Union Congresses, and at the Congress in Glasgow a resolution was adopted instructing the Parliamentary Committee to get a Bill introduced in Parliament to amend the Merchandise Marks Act, so as to provide for the marking of goods with regard to origin. There was also a similar feeling expressed by a deputation to the Board of Trade which he had the honour of introducing last May—a deputation representative of the entire trade of the country and entirely non-political in its character. As showing how very strongly this matter pressed on the industries of Sheffield, and particularly of that division which he represented, he might say he had before him an extract from *The Sheffield Telegraph* to show that large quantities of foreign goods were being distributed in this country, and re-exported to other countries, under the guise of being of English manufacture. A special instance was cited in which a Manchester merchant received a large order for goods from Australia, got them manufactured in Belgium, had them forwarded to him in Manchester, where all marks were carefully obliterated, and then shipped the goods—iron goods—to Australia as of English production. He had seen the agent who was sent by *The Hardwareman* to Germany to inquire into the production of goods in German prisons. He had given his name to the President of the Board of Trade, and he had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have seen him himself. From the character of the journal and his conversation with the commissioner himself, he could not but believe that what he stated was absolutely true and incontrovertible. He had visited German prisons, and seen the prisoners producing goods on English models. In one prison he was shown whips which were being made at the rate of three tons per day and exported to England. This might be a small matter, but in these days, when there were so many unemployed persons in this country—

there being, unfortunately 8 per cent. of the Trades Unionists out of work—such a system of foreign prison labour competition with English free labour ought not to be allowed. He earnestly invited the House to agree to the Second Reading of this Bill. It had been often before the House; it had been considered by nearly every working man in the country, and, without exception, it had met with favour and support. He hoped the President of the Board of Trade would accept this Bill, which was only put forward in defence of British industry. All he asked was that the consumers of this country should have the opportunity of knowing whether they were encouraging the industries of their own countrymen, or whether they were deliberately depriving them of the means of earning an existence. The Trades Unions of this country had agitated so strongly upon the system of prison manufactures that the Home Office had prevented the prison authorities allowing prisoners to compete with free labour. Let the President of the Board of Trade, at all events, have this mark of origin upon foreign goods, and let him protect the producers of this country from that unfair competition which prevailed at the present time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Howard Vincent.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): I have seldom heard a speech delivered in support of a Bill which had less to do with the Bill itself, or was more misleading. It would be well for the House to understand precisely what are the proposals of this Bill. It is the same old familiar Bill which the late Government year after year refused to consider, and the hon. Member knows that well.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I know nothing of the sort.

MR. MUNDELLA: The hon. Member knows that my predecessor was opposed to it.

*COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: My right hon. Friend is rather exaggerating the case. I never until now had an opportunity of speaking to the Second Reading. I could only bring it on after 12 o'clock, and the cry, "I object," always came from the right hon. Gentleman's own supporters.

MR. MUNDELLA: I beg your pardon. The records of *Hansard* will show that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol repeatedly objected to the principle of this Bill.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: When?

MR. MUNDELLA: Let the hon. Member examine the *Parliamentary Debates*, and he will see for himself. This Bill does not touch the question of prison-made goods at all. It simply will secure that the goods show the country from whence they come. What is the position? Great Britain is the largest importer of foreign goods in the world. Four hundred millions' worth of foreign goods are imported annually, and a very large quantity of those goods come from our own Colonies. What the hon. and gallant Member demands is that every article of this vast quantity of goods coming to Great Britain, no matter what it is, shall be marked with the place of origin, if it is capable of being marked. I cannot conceive anything more likely to dislocate the import trade of the country than to impose such a condition as this. More than 1,000,000,000 eggs are imported into the country from every part of the world, and, according to the Bill, every one of these eggs will have to be marked. Is not that preposterous?

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: The Aylesbury Dairy Company find no difficulty in marking their eggs.

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes, and they get something like 2d. or 2½d. each. But you cannot mark every egg that comes into this country from all parts of the world. But that is only one detail of the Bill. There are tens of thousands of articles imported which are of immense importance to the trade and manufacture of the country, and to talk about requiring every single article to be marked is the most absurd dream that ever entered the mind of man. The hon. Gentleman knows that the Bill went before a Committee of 15 Members of the House during the tenure of Office of the late Government. How many of the Members supported him? Only one!

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: The right hon. Gentleman has repeatedly misquoted me. This Bill was never referred to a Select Committee. It has never been read a second time.

MR. MUNDELLA: The Bill itself was not referred to the Select Committee, but another Bill was, and the hon. Gentleman took the opportunity to lay the provisions of his own measure before the Committee, with the result that he only got one supporter, who apologised for his action by saying he did not wish to see the hon. and gallant Gentleman left entirely alone. The fact is, that the Bill is nothing more nor less than a Bill in favour of Protection—a Bill to place every foreign nation that imports goods into this country under an enormous disability. It would prohibit the entry into this country of all goods unmarked that are capable of being marked. Now, it is to England that the vast proportion of the foreign products of the world come, and a large proportion of the goods are re-exported, and to enforce such a disability as this Bill proposes would be ruinous to our merchant shipping and import trade. I will put it to hon. Members, for instance, whether it is possible to mark every yard of ribbon brought into the country from all parts of the world or every toy imported from Japan? But there is another phase of the Bill. Suppose every foreign country to which the Bill will apply demands in return the same condition of this country, and insists that every article exported from Great Britain shall be marked, and if not so marked shall be prohibited. Such a state of things would be most injurious to British trade, for the foreign importer would then purchase his goods in countries where he is not compelled to have them marked. Does the hon. Member remember that the master cutler of Sheffield came before the Select Committee and gave evidence against his proposal? The Bill, in short, is not intended to facilitate trade, but to harass and hamper

it, and I hope the House will reject it by an overwhelming majority.

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said, he felt bound to support the Bill, because year after year the Trades Union Congress had passed resolutions, not asking for protection, which they did not in the least want, but asking in common fairness to the British workman that foreign-made goods imported into the country should be marked with the place of origin. Foreign goods were sold as British goods—that was the complaint. The right hon. Gentleman, who appeared to evince unnecessary alarm, asked what English manufacturers would do if foreign countries demanded that all English goods should be marked. That would be no injury to the trade of this country. It was the pride of English manufacturers that the mark on their goods gave them their value. He was bound to support this Bill, which had been demanded year after year by the Trade Unionists, whose trades were affected by the importation of foreign goods, and which certainly would not interfere with the trade of the country in the manner suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. GODSON (Kidderminster) said, he felt very strongly on the subject. In his constituency meetings had been held presided over by the Vice Chairman of the Radical Party, and held under Radical auspices, at which resolutions were passed to the effect of the proposals contained in the Bill, and he had found that the working classes in his part of the country were in hearty accord with the hon. Member for Central Sheffield, in desiring to have these foreign goods properly marked. He had one instance of unfair trading which he would like to lay before the House. A large firm in Birmingham engaged in the metal trade were offered an order for goods on which a certain mark was to be placed. They refused, and the order was given to a German agent in the same street. It was executed abroad, the goods were imported without a mark, in Birmingham they were marked with a mark to which they were not entitled, and then they were sent to Singapore as English-made goods.

MR. MUNDELLA was understood to say that the Customs Authorities ought not to have allowed them to enter this country unless they bore the mark of origin.

MR. GODSON said, he could only tell the right hon. Gentleman what had actually occurred, and he knew that similar tricks were played in the tin trade. He regretted that the hon. Member for Swansea was not in his place to corroborate that statement. It was most important, so far as our eastern trade was concerned, that the goods should be marked with their place of origin. It was strictly accurate that a more steady price and a greater demand was felt for English goods out there than for goods of all the other nations of the world together. His constituents felt most deeply on this question. Only quite lately 29,000 pieces of carpet were sent to England from America and sold here as of English manufacture. If they had been marked as of American origin their effect upon the English market would have been very slight; but as it was, they took away trade from the English market, and though it was now some months since the carpets were imported he was sorry to say the trade had not yet recovered from this blow.

MR. MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth) said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had taken an exaggerated and inaccurate view of the Bill. Its application was not limited to the importation of goods for consumption here. Goods were imported into England from abroad without any mark of origin, and were exported again as British-made goods.

MR. MUNDELLA said, this was a fraud punishable with the severest penalties, and the goods were liable to be seized.

MR. MUNTZ said, it was very easy to say it was a fraud, but how was the fraud to be detected? The proper way to prevent the fraud was to prevent goods from coming into this country without bearing a foreign mark. It was a very serious question, and he sympathised very heartily with his hon. Friend and with the working classes of the country. They produced the best classes of goods in the world, and were proud of producing them; and with regard to the marking of goods with a British mark, there would never arise any difficulty on that point, for buyers in foreign countries were only too glad to be possessed of articles of British origin.

MR. WARNER (Somerset, E.) said, he could not agree with the great objections which the President of the Board of Trade entertained to this Bill. They were such as could be met in Committee, and probably the promoters would be willing to substitute for the words "incapable of being marked" such words as "inconvenient" or "almost impossible." He was not one of those who would absolutely prohibit the entrance of all these goods into the country, but he would impose the severest penalties in cases of fraud such as had been described that day. He hoped the Government would withdraw their opposition to the Bill.

SIR J. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, he must express his surprise at the line which some hon. Members who were strong Free Traders had taken on this question. The Bill was nothing more nor less than a Bill to protect particular industries, and, if it were passed, it would be to the great disadvantage of the consumers of the country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had told them that the measure was being brought forward in the interests of the working classes; but seeing that the goods exported from this country were so much greater in quantity than the goods imported, he could not see how the Bill would benefit the working classes. For every man employed in the manufacture abroad of goods exported to England four or five men were working at home on goods exported from England to other countries, and why, in order to protect a particular industry, should they run the risk of losing a large share of that employment? It would be a most foolish policy to promote legislation of that kind, and it would assuredly lead to reprisals. He hoped that no Free Traders would give their support to the measure.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, if it were Protection to have the truth told as to the origin of goods, then he was a Protectionist, and was, as every honest man should be, in favour of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was against telling the truth. And why? Because he was a party to ordering French shells for use in the British Navy. It was true the right hon. Gentleman professed to know nothing of the matter, and said he had not concerned himself in a question which so seriously affected the trade of his constituency, but——

Mr. MUNDELLA: The hon. Member is entirely mistaken as to the matter of the French shells. I did take a great deal of interest in it, as the correspondence shows.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, he was, then, unable to understand why at the time the right hon. Gentleman said the reverse. At any rate, after such conduct, he was not surprised to finding the right hon. Gentleman in opposition to a Bill which was likely to be beneficial to Sheffield, the manufacturers of which were peculiarly subjected to these frauds. The right hon. Gentleman threatened them with retaliatory measures on the part of foreign Governments, and he could only reply that they would be delighted at such a course, as "English made" was a phrase to conjure with, and a certain passport to sale, especially in the East. This was a good Bill universally demanded by the workmen of this country, and the fact that it was opposed by the right hon. Gentleman, who, in defiance of the interests of his own constituents, had been a party to the importation of foreign shells for the use of the British Navy, was the most conclusive argument that could be advanced in its favour.

Mr. ROBY (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles) said, he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in his opposition to the Bill. There was nothing more hindering to British trade than the continual stoppages that took place at the Customs. He believed the Bill was incapable of being carried out in a rational manner. They would have to mark goods not as they came in the bulk, but in such small parts as would be sold in retail commerce. That was practically impossible. The Bill would only cast an additional burden on and hindrance to trade which he believed would be found by importers and exporters to be simply intolerable.

Mr. G. W. PALMER (Reading) said, he, too, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would stand firm. The statement that this Bill was demanded by the Trade Unions seemed to him to indicate a want of faith on the part of the working men in their own power to meet foreign competition. As a manufacturer he had not the slightest fear of the future of the industries of this country if they were conducted in the future with the same ability and honesty that had distinguished them in the past, and he therefore hoped that the Motion for the Second Reading would be defeated by an overwhelming majority.

Mr. J. Havelock Wilson rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! There is still another five minutes in which the Debate can proceed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. Rigby, Forfar) said, there seemed to be some misconception as to the existing state of the law with reference to the importation of foreign goods. He agreed that if anything was to be said it should be the truth, and the existing Act was most careful to provide for that; for it was a penal offence, not only in the case of an importer, but in the case of a British manufacturer or trader, to put a false description upon goods offered for sale. The fault of the Bill was that it enforced a statement as to the origin of goods in cases where such a statement could not be made without placing great difficulty in the way of our import trade.

Colonel Howard Vincent rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided :—Ayes 157 ; Noes 183.—(Division List, No. 38.)

## FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND) EXTENSION OF POWERS BILL.—(No. 174.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

**THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN,** Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, the Bill contained one clause which was of importance to the fishing industry in the North of Scotland, and the Government were willing to accept it as it stood.

**SIR H. MAXWELL** (Wigton) : I could not hear what the right hon. Gentleman said.

**MR. BUCHANAN** (Aberdeenshire, E.) : The Bill embodies a suggestion made before the Select Committee which sat last year on sea fisheries. It was moved by the Chairman of the Fishery Board, and agreed to by the other members of the Board. It enables the Board to borrow money and to spread the repayment over a number of years.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

## SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 182.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

**SIR H. MAXWELL** (Wigton) said, another Bill was being prepared on this subject, and he moved that the Order for Second Reading be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

Motion agreed to.

Order discharged ; Bill withdrawn.

## MERCHANDISE MARKS (FILES) BILL. (No. 126.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

***MR. STUART-WORTLEY** (Sheffield, Hallam), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, he hoped the same indulgence would be extended to it as to the Bill of his hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. B. Coleridge). [MR. BURT : I object.] Then if objection was taken he would move that the Order for Second Reading be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn, as nothing was to be gained by crowding the Notice Paper. It appeared to him to be wise that, seeing the quarter in which objection was so persistently taken—namely, the Treasury Bench, he should leave the chance of legislation on the subject to his hon. and learned Colleague.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn."—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

**MR. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) : I wish to know, Sir, if the hon. Gentleman is entitled to make a speech after objection has been taken to the Bill ?

**MR. SPEAKER** : I see no objection.

**MR. STUART - WORTLEY** : I would like to know whether any Amendment is to be put down by the Government to the Bill of my hon. and learned Friend ?

**THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT,** Morpeth) was understood to say that he could not at present inform the hon. Gentleman.

**MR. T. M. HEALY** : Mr. Speaker, I beg to ask whether, a Motion having been made that the Order for Second Reading of this Bill be discharged, it is in Order to move that the Debate be adjourned ? If so, I move that this Debate be now adjourned.

***MR. SPEAKER** : I do not know that I could put that. If the hon. Member wishes to discharge the Bill I shall put the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Order discharged ; Bill withdrawn.

## VALUATION (METROPOLIS) BILL. (No. 130.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

**MR. PICKERSGILL** (Bethnal Green, S.W.) moved the Second Reading of this Bill. He said, it was not in any sense a Party measure. It was backed by two hon. Members on the other side of the House. It was purely a London Bill, and its object was to amend the Valuation Bill of 1869 and secure more uniformity in assessments throughout the Metropolis. If the House would agree to the Second Reading he proposed to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

Objection being taken, Second Reading deferred till Friday.

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(No. 171.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 26th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, the measure proposed to give the authorities in Scotland power to adopt the Free Libraries Act without having to poll the whole population.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): I must object.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he hoped the right hon. Member would withdraw his objection. This measure was on the lines of a Bill passed last year, which worked admirably.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, that last year, by permission of the Party sitting above the Gangway, a similar Bill was passed for Ireland. What was good for Ireland might reasonably be extended to Scotland.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): It was killed in the House of Lords.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said, this Bill was strongly supported in Scotland, and he hoped it would be allowed to pass.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday next.

### DERELICT VESSELS (REPORTS) BILL.

(No. 87.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 1st May.*]

Order for Committee read.

Clause 1.

DR. MACDONA (Rotherhithe) said, he hoped there would be no objection to this Bill, which merely provided that masters of vessels sighting derelicts should report them.

Objection being taken, Committee deferred till Friday.

*Mr. Pickersgill*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) BILL.

(No. 191.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### FOREIGN AND COLONIAL MEAT BILL.

(No. 34.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

### PUBLIC BUILDINGS (LONDON) BILL.

(No. 79.)

Considered in Committee; Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday, 21st May.

### QUARTER SESSIONS BILL [*Lords*].

(No. 162.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

### PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Fourth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

### COUNTY MAGISTRATES APPOINTED SINCE 5TH MAY, 1893.

Return [presented 30th April] to be printed. [No. 97.]

### HOUSES OF LEGISLATURE (VICTORIA AND NEW SOUTH WALES).

Return [presented 1st May] to be printed. [No. 98.]

### COUNTY RATES (SCOTLAND).

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 30th April; *Sir George Trevelyan*]; to lie upon the Table.

### INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1895 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### TREATY SERIES (No. 12, 1894).

Copy presented,—of Convention between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary for the Establishment of International Copyright. Signed at Vienna 24th April, 1893. Ratifications exchanged at Vienna 14th April, 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday, 3rd May 1894.*

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## NEW WRIT ISSUED.

For Dumfries District of Burghs, *v.* Robert Threshie Reid, esquire, Q.C., Her Majesty's Solicitor General.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE TIPPERARY UNION.

**Mr. HOGAN** (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a labourer named John Allen, in the division of Cappagh, Union of Tipperary, had a representation paper duly lodged with the Tipperary Board of Guardians for a cottage now erected on the estate of Hugh Scott, J.P., Kilbeg; that the Guardians for the division erroneously represented to the Board that Allen had left the country, with the result that a smith was returned for the said cottage and plot; that a protest, signed by the leading ratepayers of the division against the action of the Guardians in illegally returning a tradesman for a labourer's cottage, was forwarded to the Local Government Board and the Tipperary Board of Guardians; that the Local Government Board advised the Guardians of the illegality of their action; and that such advice has been ignored; and whether he will take the necessary steps to secure the appointment of Allen as tenant of this cottage and plot, to which Allen is entitled as a *bonâ fide* agricultural labourer and the person who duly lodged the representation paper, on the strength of which the cottage was built?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND** (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The facts are as stated in paragraph 1. The selection of tenants is a matter which rests entirely with the Guardians, and the Local Government Board have no power to act as suggested in the last paragraph of the question.

### BRITISH MARKED GOODS.

**Colonel HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the suggestion made by Mr. Wheatley, of Sheffield, and others, that, in order to enable British goods to be distinguished amid the mass of fraudulent imitations with which the Home and other markets are inundated, a national British trade mark should be established for articles of British and Irish production; and if he proposes to take any steps in the direction in question?

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. Mundella, Sheffield, Brightside): There is no reason why British and Irish merchants should not voluntarily apply a mark to their commodities indicating that they are of British manufacture if they feel that it is in their interest to do so, but there is no power to order the compulsory marking of all goods of British origin with a uniform mark, and there is no intention to ask for such powers.

**Colonel HOWARD VINCENT**: Is the right hon. Gentleman in favour of the suggestion of Mr. Wheatley?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: No, Sir.

*__Mr. TOMLINSON__ (Preston): Will the right hon. Gentleman support legislation to secure that all goods of British or Irish manufacture may be marked with the place of origin, so as to prevent foreign goods being sold as British?

**Mr. MUNDELLA** was understood to say that British and Irish manufacturers were well able to protect their own interests in this matter.

### "ROYAL SOVEREIGN" BATTLESHIPS.

**Mr. GOURLEY**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether all or any of Her Majesty's ships of the *Royal Sovereign* class are constructed with or without outside mid-ship keels; and whether it is intended to add bilge keels to any or all ships of this class which are now without outside mid-ship keels; if so, will he state whether this is for the purpose of preventing excessive rolling when in a heavy sea, and the creation of a steadier platform in smooth water?

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): Only one ship of the *Royal Sovereign* class—the *Repulse*—is yet fitted with external bilge keels. None of the ships have outside mid-ship keels. The behaviour of the *Repulse* and other ships of the class will be carefully compared; and if the fitting of bilge keels in the *Repulse* is found sensibly to improve the behaviour in a seaway, a similar improvement can be made in her sister ships. In smooth water external bilge keels do not influence steadiness of platform.

## FISHING BOAT LIGHTS.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether by Article 10 of the Regulations for collisions at sea at present in force fishing boats must carry two lights, of which one must practically be fixed to the mast, and the other at some point on the gunwale; whether he is aware that the smaller single-masted boats when hauling their lines often require to have their mast down, and that, inasmuch as the lines do not come over any particular point of the gunwale, but sometimes over one, sometimes another, and indeed all round, a light fixed anywhere on the gunwale would impede these operations; whether information has reached him that the Regulations are found impracticable by small fishing boats, and in point of fact are not adopted, a hand light being substituted; and whether he will investigate the matter and consider whether Regulations cannot be modified in the case of such boats?

MR. MUNDELLA: I am aware that difficulty is sometimes experienced by small fishing vessels in observing the Regulations as to lights. The whole question of the lights and signals of fishing vessels is under consideration, but it is undesirable that alteration should be made in the Regulations without International agreement.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Did not the International Conference recommend a series of alterations for adoption?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes; but fishing vessels were not referred to. This question will be referred to the Committee which deals with all these matters.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But did the Committee not recommend an alteration of Clause 9 which concerns fishing vessels?

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir; they reported that it was undesirable to make any change in the International Regulations.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Did the Committee make no suggestion as regarded fishing vessels?

MR. MUNDELLA: No, Sir.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Did they not recommend an alteration in Clause 9 which specifically refers to fishing vessels?

MR. MUNDELLA: Clause 9 was not referred to them.

MR. CROMBIE: Will the matter now be referred for consideration?

MR. MUNDELLA: It will be referred, in the first place, to the Committee which has to deal with all these questions, and if they report in favour of a change, then the matter will go before the Foreign Committee.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Has not the Committee recommended that before any change is made it should be submitted to the shipping trade for its opinion?

MR. MUNDELLA: Fishing vessels are not included in the shipping trade.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: They are ships, at any rate.

## IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. BODKIN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the unanimous resolution of the late Congress of the National Teachers in Ireland, strongly urging that monitors who are trained at the public expense for five years should, instead of being as at present cast adrift on the world at the end of that term, when there are not sufficient vacancies among the teachers, be retained to assist in the schools for three years further or until vacancies are found for them as teachers, at the very moderate salaries which they enjoyed during the last year of monitorship; is he aware that the teaching staffs in the schools are at present under-manned; that very many schools whose attendance, ranging over 40, would entitle them to the assistance of a monitor are deprived of such assistance through no fault of theirs, but through the rule which ordains that vacancies amongst the monitors, whenever and however created, must be filled up at a certain given time once in the year; and whether, inasmuch as the adoption of the Rule advocated by the Teachers' Congress enables the Board to largely increase the available staff at little or no additional public expense, he will give the matter his early and favourable consideration?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the proposals to retain monitors after the completion of their five years' course would involve a considerable increase in the expenditure. The salary for the male monitors rises from £5 first year to £18 fifth year, and that of the female monitor rises from £5 first year to £16 fifth year. Deducting the salary of a new monitor of first year, whose appointment under the suggested arrangement would be superseded by the retention of the monitor who had completed his course, the net cost of retaining a male monitor would be £13, and of retaining a female monitor £11, or a total of £8,317 under the proposed arrangement. The appointments of monitors have primarily in view the preparatory training of the monitors for the office of National teacher, to which object that of giving assistance to the school is subordinate. Moreover, the supposition is that every school shall have a sufficient staff to carry on the business of the school without the assistance of monitors, and the Commissioners give adequate salaries for such a staff. The fulfilment of their course on the 30th of June by fifth-year monitors occurs once a year, and the recommendations made by Inspectors take these vacancies into account. Should a monitor in an exceptional case be discontinued during a year there is no reason for filling up the vacancy thus created forthwith, particularly if the discontinuance was owing to inefficiency of teacher, or of monitor, or of both. Seeing that in addition to the 8,193 principal teachers there are 4,057 assistant teachers, industrial teachers, &c., recognised in National schools—leaving out of consideration the 5,336 paid monitors—the Commissioners cannot admit that the schools are understaffed.

**Mr. BODKIN**: Does the right hon. Gentleman regard a single teacher as a sufficient staff for the teaching of children in a school without any assistance or without such salary as will enable him to procure assistance? Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire in reference to this matter?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I do not know what is the opinion of the Commissioners upon this supposititious case, and I should be sorry to put my opinion against theirs. I will call their attention to the point.

## THE SIMSON ESTATE, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

**Mr. BODKIN**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the proceedings on the property known as the Simson Estate, near Elphin, in the County Roscommon, now under the control of the receiver, Judge Monroe; is he aware that about three years ago the property was put up for sale in the Courts, and 15 tenants on the estate, through their solicitor, Mr. Plunkett Kerry, of Dublin, bid for their respective holdings 14 years' purchase, and the bid being the only one made was accepted; is he aware that the agent or receiver on the estate, Mr. Jameson, of 68, Harcourt Street, Dublin, has recently caused a number of these tenants to be served with eviction notices, and so converted them into caretakers, and threatens them with immediate eviction, though the tenants are ready and willing to carry out the terms of their contract of sale; and will he kindly communicate with the Land Purchase Commissioners, and with Judge Monroe in regard to those proceedings?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The estate referred to does not appear to be known to the Receiver Judge. The only cases of which the Land Commissioners have cognisance on the estate are 11, in which the advances have already been made, and, therefore, it is assumed the question cannot refer to these cases. It is possible that negotiations for sale may have been pending with other tenants on the property, but no applications have been lodged with the Land Commission in respect of them. However, I have directed further inquiry to be made in the matter.

**Mr. BODKIN**: I may say that my information comes direct from one of the tenants on the estate.

## LESSON BOOKS IN IRISH SCHOOLS.

**Mr. BODKIN**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is the Return, regarding the use of lesson books under the Board of National Education, which was ordered some months ago and promised by the Department before the end of last month, yet ready to be laid upon the Table of the House?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Commissioners inform me that the Return in question is being closed, and will be ready for presentation in a few days.

## THE GLENLARA MURDER.

**Mr. SMITH-BARRY** (Hunts, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Police Authorities were fully aware of the danger incurred by the late James Donovan while residing at the evicted farm at Glenlara; whether he is aware that application had several times been made that he should be placed under special police protection, and that the police had admitted that a hut ought to be erected in the yard for that purpose; and whether, under these circumstances, the Government will make provision for his family?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Police Authorities inform me that they were not aware that Donovan was in any special danger, and they believed that the protection afforded him by patrols was adequate. No application, I am informed, was ever made that Donovan should be placed under special protection. An application was made on September 30 last for sufficient police protection, which was duly afforded to the caretaker who preceded Donovan and to Donovan himself up to the date of his murder. This application was made by a Mr. Hanna, an officer of the Cork Defence Union, by whom Donovan was employed, and the District Inspector Reports that he informed this gentleman that if Donovan and his neighbour, the evicted tenant, continued quarrelling, personal protection would have to be given and a hut erected, but the decision of the agent not to press matters and the consequent friendly relations between the parties removed, in the opinion of the local police, the necessity for constant protection. Neither the agent nor Mr. Hanna at any time took exception to the sufficiency of the protection afforded by police patrols, nor did they suggest any more effective protection. I am also informed that Mr. Hanna told the County Inspector that the police were most attentive to Donovan, that the District Inspector visited him frequently, and that he did not anticipate Donovan was in any serious danger under the circumstances then prevailing, which remained unchanged up to the time of the murder. Regarding the last paragraph of the question, I believe the police are at present looking after the support of the two children left by deceased.

**Mr. SMITH-BARRY**: Is it not a fact that the police were aware that the caretaker and the evicted tenant were on extremely bad terms, and that, I think, in the presence of the police, certainly in the presence of Mr. Hanna, the evicted tenant struck the late caretaker in the face?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! I think that, as this case must be the subject of inquiry in a Court of Justice, questions of that kind should not be asked, as they might tend to prejudice it.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): As I understand the right hon. Gentleman, he says no application was made for special protection, and he speaks of sufficient protection. I wish to ask him what distinction is drawn by the police between special and sufficient police protection?

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.): Are we to understand that the Cork Defence Union, of which I understand the Member for South Hunts is president, intend to make no provision for this man's family?

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL**: They did not murder him.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I am afraid I cannot answer that question. I must leave that to the hon. Member himself. In answer to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, I have to say I presume that by special protection is meant special personal protection. The District Inspector did not understand, so far as I know, that by special protection Mr. Hanna meant close constant personal protection.

**Mr. W. JOHNSTON** (Belfast, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he agrees in the statement alleged to have been made by Lord Rosebery in Manchester yesterday, that "the announcement of this murder fell upon Conservative and Unionist circles like gentle rain from Heaven on a parched earth."

[No answer was given.]

### SCOTCH SALMON FISHERY REGULATIONS.

**Dr. MACGREGOR** (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of placing the management and regulation of salmon fishings in fresh water lochs and rivers in Scotland under the control of County Councils, and so enable them to licence fishings with rod and line, in the interest of the health and recreation of the public, and not for the exclusive enjoyment and profit of a few individuals, as hitherto practised by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests; and will he prevent the further alienation from the public of the Crown rights in these fishings?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I have communicated with the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests, who, as the hon. Member is aware, are not responsible to the Scottish Office, and have received the following information:—

> "No sales of Crown salmon fishings in Scotland are now being made. The salmon fishings in fresh-water lochs and rivers in Scotland which are let by the Commissioners of Woods are few in number and of little importance. The Commissioner of Woods in charge of the Scotch Revenues would be glad to receive particulars of any fresh-water lochs and rivers where the Crown rights have not been granted away by ancient Charters, and he is disposed to favour the granting of licences to fish with rod and line as an experiment."

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE STRABANE UNION.

**Mr. A. O'CONNOR** (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have yet come to a decision as to the steps to be taken to enforce the recommendations of their Inspector with regard to the labourers' houses condemned as unfit for human habitation in the Strabane Union?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: An Order was made yesterday by the Local Government Board in the terms of Section 8 of the Labourers Act of 1891, giving their Inspector authority to exercise all the duties of the Strabane Sanitary Authority as provided for in the Labourers Acts.

### THE RED SEA SLAVE TRADE.

**Mr. J. PEASE** (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government has received any information as to the extensive Slave Trade now carried on between African ports in the Red Sea and the ports in the Yemen; what steps, if any, are being taken by British authorities in Aden, or elsewhere, for the repression of this contraband traffic; and whether Papers relating to the Red Sea Slave Trade since 1890 will be laid upon the Table of the House?

***The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): Information relating to the Slave Trade in the Red Sea since 1890 has been laid before the House in Lord Cromer's Annual Reports contained in Egypt No. 3 of 1892, No. 3 of 1893, and No. 1 of 1894. There is no reason to suppose that the trade is extensive. The British Authorities at Aden have no control over the routes which the trade would follow, but Her Majesty's cruisers keep a constant watch in the Gulf of Aden, and Her Majesty's Consular Officers on the Arabian Coast are in communication with them and the authorities, both local and Egyptian. The Camel Corps organised by the Egyptian Government has worked effectively, and is reported to have almost completely stopped shipments for Arabia from the North of Suakim.

**Mr. J. PEASE**: May I ask the hon. Baronet if he will inquire from the authorities at Aden with a view to considering what can be done, in conjunction with the Turkish Authorities, to prevent this contraband traffic; and is the hon. Gentleman aware that dhows engaged in this traffic fly the Italian flag?

**Sir E. GREY**: I will inquire into the matter.

### DUNQUIN LANDING-PLACE.

**Sir T. ESMONDE** (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will direct the attention of the Congested Districts Board to the advisability of improving the landing-place at Dunquin, in County Kerry, opposite the Great Blasket, where they are about to make a landing-place for canoes?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have drawn the attention of the Congested Districts Board to the suggestion of my hon. Friend, and inquiry will be made into the matter.

### THE CORK STREET PREACHERS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at what age Mr. George Williams, late a clerk in the Paymaster General's Office, Dublin Castle, and now the leader of the Cork Street preachers, was permitted to retire from the Public Service, and what his salary and length of service was; whether his pension was calculated at the ordinary rate of one-sixtieth of salary for every year of service, or whether any special addition was made to it; and, if so, what the amount advanced was, and on what grounds the addition was made; whether the Government have obtained information that Mr. Williams is at present in receipt of a salary of £3 a week from the Irish Open Air Mission Association (a branch of the Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics) for his services in conducting the street preaching in Cork; whether it is legal for a person, who has retired from the Public Service on pension on the ground of ill-health, to accept a salaried position elsewhere; whether he is aware that, on several recent occasions, Mr. Williams has engaged in severe physical struggles with the police; and whether any procedure exists whereby the granting of a pension on the ground of ill-health can be reviewed where it appears that no sufficient grounds for granting it existed?

MR. J. MORLEY: Mr. George Williams, late a clerk in the Paymaster General's Office, Dublin Castle, was pensioned last year at the age of 43 on salary of £375 and service of 23 years. His pension was calculated at the ordinary rate—namely, 23-60ths of salary. I believe it to be a fact that Mr. Williams is in receipt of salary from the Irish Open Air Mission Association, but as to the amount of his remuneration from this source I have no information. The Government is not concerned with the earnings of a Civil servant after retirement, unless such earnings are derived from the Consolidated Fund or from money provided by Parliament. It is a fact that the gentleman named has on recent occasions been engaged in physical struggles with the police, by offering violent resistance to them. There is no power to review a pension once granted under the Superannuation Acts on the ground that the pensioner's health has improved, but he might be recalled to duty under Section 11 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, under penalty of forfeiture of pension, if it could be established that he has ceased to be incapable of performing his official duties.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: Is it not a fact that the Secretary to the Treasury had stated that this gentleman's handwriting is so bad that he would be sorry to take him back into the public service?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the papers and certificates on which this pension is founded, so that we may be able to see the representations made by Mr. Williams' medical attendant, and the Report of the medical officers of the Government and to the Government medical advisers?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will see whether there is any precedent for the production of such papers.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): Is there no power of reviewing the pension of a person who has been found engaged in resisting the police?

MR. J. MORLEY: Perhaps that might be done under the section I have referred to. If, however, the Government think it worth while, and they are satisfied that Mr. Williams has given such evidences of physical capacity that he can be recalled to the Castle, it would be competent for them to take that course; but I very much doubt whether it would be worth while.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: Has not this gentleman only struggled with the police in order that he may preach the Gospel?

[No answer was given.]

### HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that both the caissons at Haulbowline badly require overhauling, the one at the entrance to the floating basin at present leaking about three feet each tide, and neither of them having been docked or painted for the past five years; and whether, in view of the fact that these caissons cost some £12,000, and that further delay will cause large additional outlay, the Admiralty will cause this work to be taken in hand forthwith?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee) (who replied) said: A Report has been received from the Admiral at Queenstown, respecting the caissons in question, and such repairs as may be found necessary will be carried out.

### THE IRISH MAIL.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that the steamer express between Euston and Liverpool performs the journey at a rate of over 50 miles an hour, and that on the Great Northern line the distance from King's Cross to Grantham (105½ miles) is covered at the rate of 52 miles an hour, notwithstanding a series of severe gradients, while the rate of speed of the mail trains between London and Holyhead is only about 43 miles an hour; and whether, in view of the negotiations now in progress between the Post Office and the London and North Western Railway Company relative to the acceleration of the Irish mails, and the importance of the question, he will bring these facts to the notice of the Company?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): The hon. Member somewhat over-estimates the speed of the American steamer expresses between Euston and Liverpool, which is a little over 48, not 50, miles an hour, but he is right in saying that on the Great Northern line some of the express trains cover the distance between King's Cross and Grantham at the rate of 52 miles an hour. These speeds, however, are attained by unbroken running from point to point, but the Irish mail train has stops to make and mails to pick up on the way, besides maintaining several important junctions, for all of which allowance of time must be made. If the speed of the Irish mail train be taken merely as between the stopping stations—say, between Euston and Rugby—it will be found to be not 43 miles an hour only but 47½, or only half a mile behind the speed of the American expresses. While thus answering the hon. Member's question, I am fully alive to the desirableness of obtaining any acceleration which is practicable in the running of the Irish mail train.

### CASTLE MARTYR LICENSING CASE.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a licensing case tried at Castle Martyr (County Cork) Petty Sessions on the 24th of April, when Mrs. Corry, publican, and Messrs. Scannell, Barry, and Kinsella, of that town, were summoned by Sergeant Jestin, R.I.C., for a breach of the Sunday Closing Act; whether he is aware that many of the statements made by the sergeant were not corroborated by the other constable present, and were disproved by subsequent witnesses; whether he is also aware that the Magistrates unanimously dismissed all the charges; and whether, in view of the admission of Sergeant Jestin, when under cross-examination, that he was not on friendly terms with one of the defendants, a school teacher, whose prospects might have been seriously compromised by a conviction, the Constabulary Authorities will order a sworn inquiry into all the circumstances connected with these proceedings?

MR. J. MORLEY: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph. I am informed that only one statement made by the sergeant was uncorroborated by the other constable present, and that the witnesses who disproved the sergeant's statement were the defendants in the case. The Magistrates unanimously dismissed all the charges. The solicitor for the school teacher stated in Court that no suggestion of anything was made except that the police had made a mistake, and as the case has been already investigated at Petty Sessions, the Inspector General does not consider that any useful object would be gained by a further investigation as suggested.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Under the circumstances, will the right hon. Gentleman request the Constabulary Authorities to consider the desirability of transferring Sergeant Jestin to another station?

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not think I can suggest that; but I will call the attention of the authorities to the matter.

### MIDDLESEX RECORDS.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that, while the Local Government Act of 1888 divided the former County of Middlesex into two, the whole of the records belonging to the old undivided county have been appropriated by the new County of Middlesex, and removed from Clerkenwell Sessions House to Westminster; whether he is aware that this removal was effected without the assent of the London Court of Quarter Sessions, and that the authority by which it was done is disputed; and whether, looking to the public interest attaching to the documents in question, he will exercise any powers possessed by the Local Government Board under the Act of 1888 to bring about an equitable division of the documents by appropriating to each county those referring to transactions on its own ground?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I learn that the County of Middlesex claim to have the right to the custody of the records referred to, and that they were kept at the Clerkenwell Sessions House pending the completion of alterations at the Sessional House at Westminster. I am informed, however, that the Court of London Quarter Sessions recently appointed three Justices to confer with three members of the London County Council, with a view to an apportionment, if possible, of these records between the Counties of London and Middlesex, and that the London County Council are considering what course it is expedient for them to take in the matter.

### OUTRAGE AT CLONDELARA.

Mr. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, is he aware that the houses of two farmers named Lally and Gunning were fired into upon Friday night at Clondelara, in King's County; have any arrests been made; and have the police any evidence to show what was the motive for this outrage?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The outrages referred to in the first paragraph took place on the night of the 25th of April; one person has been arrested and remanded in custody. The police believe they are in possession of the motive for the commission of the outrage; but, inasmuch as any statement in the matter would be calculated to frustrate the ends of justice, I cannot at present disclose the motive.

### WELSH CHURCH DISESTABLISHMENT BILL.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, before the Motion for the Second Reading of the Established Church (Wales) Bill, he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return, by parishes and counties, of the property of the Church in Wales in glebe and tithe rent-charge, showing in each case whether such property would be devoted by the Bill to parochial purposes or to the central fund; and whether he would include in such Return a statement of the tithe rent-charge in each parish belonging to Colleges and schools, or to lay impropriators?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant the Return on this day's Paper as to the sums spent on the restoration of the Welsh cathedrals?

Mr. D. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydfil): I beg to ask also the right hon. Gentleman if he will grant the Return, standing on the Paper this day, relating to the Revenues of the Welsh Church; will he also in the Return show the population of each parish?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): I am in communication with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as to the possibility of getting a Return such as that suggested by the hon. Member. I am not certain whether it will be feasible to obtain the information within a reasonable time. I will ask hon. Gentlemen to postpone these questions until Tuesday next.

### COUNTY FERMANAGH MAGISTRACY.

Mr. M'GILLIGAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the small number of Magistrates residing in County Fermanagh, the inconvenience resulting to suitors, and the small proportion of Catholics on the local Bench (although Catholics constitute more than half the population), whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland proposes soon to make further appointments to the Commission of the Peace for the County?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor intends to make further appointments of Magistrates in Fermanagh, and hopes to do so at an early date.

### DRUMSHANBO STATIONMASTER.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the stationmaster appointed at Drumshanbo, on the Cavan and Leitrim Light Railway, in place of Mr. Melvin who was recently dismissed, is the same man who was dismissed on the Sligo and Northern Counties Railway for having caused a serious accident on that line some short time ago; and whether, as the baronies, to whom the Treasury have to make an annual contribution, must make good all losses caused by accident and otherwise, and seeing that, in the case of a similar guaranteed line from Tralee to Dingle, very serious financial responsibilities were recently imposed on the public taxes as the result of an accident on that line, the Board of Trade will consider it advisable to order an inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the dismissal of Mr. Melvin, and the appointment of his successor?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Board of Trade have no power to order an inquiry into the circumstances connected with the dismissal of Mr. Melvin and the appointment of his successor. In the Tralee and Dingle case referred to the inquiry was into the causes of a serious railway accident, with consequent loss of life.

### THE BURMESE FRONTIER.

MR. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to a telegram from the Rangoon correspondent of *The Times* in the issue of the 28th of April, about the alleged conditions of the Anglo-Chinese Convention relating to the frontier of Burma, and whether it is true that that Convention includes the renunciation in favour of China of all British rights over the States of Monglem and Kiang Hunn, the right of free navigation of the Irrawaddy to Chinese vessels, the importation duty-free of Chinese goods into Burma for six years, while British goods will be subject to an import duty of two-thirds of 5 per cent. *ad valorem*, and the abandonment of Chinese claims to the region north of Bhamo; and whether the decennial tribute mission from Burma to China will be continued or will be allowed to drop?

*SIR E. GREY: The text of the Convention cannot yet have reached Pekin, and under the circumstances it would not be desirable in the public interest that Her Majesty's Government should make any public statement as to its provisions.

### ROSEHALL COLLIERY.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has inquired into a complaint by the miners of Rosehall Colliery, in Lanarkshire, to the following effect:—A checkweigher complained that the men were defrauded in two respects: that they were not credited with quarters of hundredweights, and that the balance of the weighing machine was unfair. On the 13th and 17th of April respectively the Inspector of Mines and the Inspector of Weights decided that the complaints were well founded. On the 20th a notice was posted up dismissing all the men. On the 23rd a deputation of the men were informed by the manager that they would be re-engaged, but only on condition that they dismissed the checkweigher, as he had been causing disturbances at the colliery by bringing Inspectors, and that in the event of the men appointing another checkweigher, they must send in his name, and if he did not suit the manager he would shut down the pit; whether, if the facts are correctly stated, the action of the manager was legal; and what steps he intends to take in the matter?

MR. ASQUITH: The statement in the question is correct, except as to the balance of the weighing machine being unfair. The weighing machine was fair, but there was a dispute between the pitheadman and the checkweigher as to where the balance should stand at the moment of fixing the weight of the coal. However, in justice to the miners, the statements in the question require to be supplemented. The deductions of the odd weight had long been accustomed to be made in lieu of deductions for dirt, which was not enforced. On neither of these matters—the not crediting the quarters of hundredweights, and as to the weighing—had any complaint been made, either to the owners or manager, or by the checkweigher or miners; and in calling in the Inspectors the checkweigher acted without communicating with the men. In my opinion, the dismissal of the men, in order to get rid of the checkweigher, is not actually illegal; but it is contrary to the intention of the Act, and the Bill I hope to introduce will declare such actions illegal. I do not think that any proceedings could be instituted against the manager with any prospect of success.

### THE ARMENIAN PRISONERS.

**Mr. CHANNING** (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is able to state the result of the representations which have been made with regard to the Armenian prisoners who have been sentenced to death by special tribunals at Sivas and at Yuzgat?

***Sir E. GREY**: The sentences are still under examination. No decision has yet been taken, but there is every reason to hope that, except in cases of assassination, the Sultan will exercise his clemency and commute the death sentences.

### THE SLAUGHTER OF KINE IN BEHAR.

**Sir W. WEDDERBURN** (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a Memorial of the Behar Indigo Planters' Association, dated the 28th of January last, addressed to the Viceroy, in which they state that there is urgent necessity for the issue of Regulations regarding the slaughter of kine, in order that the religious feelings or prejudices of their Hindu fellow-subjects may be spared as much as possible without infringing on the rights of any other community; and to a letter addressed by Sir W. Hudson, President of the above Association, to *The Pioneer*, in which it is alleged that the most cherished feelings of orthodox Hindus are unnecessarily wounded daily, and the slaughter of cattle is often conducted in a manner which would not be tolerated in England, and in which Sir W. Hudson recommends that the ancient Regulations of the Mahommedan Emperors on the subject of cow-killing should be revived and applied to the whole of India; whether he is aware that Mr. Arthur Rogers, of the Bengal and North-Western Railway, has matured a scheme for this purpose, which has the approval of leading Mahommedans and Hindus, and has commended itself to Mr. Le Messurier, who was deputed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to inquire into the origin of the cow-killing riots; and whether the Secretary of State will cause inquiry to be made into the merits of this scheme, with a view to restoring friendly relations among the various Indian communities?

**The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA** (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): My attention has been called to the Behar Planters' Memorial and Sir William Hudson's letter. I am not acquainted with Mr. Rogers' scheme; but, if Mr. Le Messurier has reported in its favour I have no doubt but that it has been considered by the Government of India. I will ask the Government of India what answer has been returned to the Behar planters, and also whether Mr. Rogers' scheme has come before them, and, if so, what is their opinion upon it.

### DOCKYARD PENSIONS.

**Viscount CRANBORNE** (Rochester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the case of the three brothers Parrett, who were employed in Her Majesty's Dockyard, Chatham; is he aware that one brother had been over 30 years, and the other two nearly 40 years, in the dockyard; that in every case at the times of their death they had almost completed the period of service after which they would have been entitled to a pension; that in one case the man actually died when the formalities granting it to him were on the eve of conclusion; and that, nevertheless, no pension or gratuity has been paid to the families they left behind; and whether the Admiralty will consider some change in the Regulations by which these pensions, which are, in fact, deferred pay, may not be entirely lost in such cases?

**Mr. E. ROBERTSON** (who replied) said: The facts are substantially as stated in the question. A pension is personal to the man who has earned it; and the fact that he unfortunately does not live to draw it confers no claim for compensation on the widow or children.

The Regulations as to pensions are applicable to the whole Civil Service of the Crown, and cannot be altered by the Admiralty.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: But is not the pension partly in the nature of deferred pay, and could not some grant be equitably made in cases of this kind? Will the hon. Gentleman inquire as to that?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: These pensions are not of the nature of deferred pay. I shall be happy to show the noble Lord the Regulations on the subject.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Is there no compassionate fund out of which allowances can be made?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: No; I think not.

## DRUMREILLY EVICTIONS.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 5th of April last Thomas Carrigan was evicted from his holding at Stradrenan, Drumreilly, South Leitrim, at the suit of his landlord, Mr. Marsham Jones; that this tenant has been five years in occupation, and paid a year's rent every year during that period, but his receipts being back-dated by the agent, Mr. Hewson, he was decreed for six years' arrears of rent; whether he is aware that Carrigan offered to pay one-and-a-half year's rent, but his offer was rejected, and Carrigan and his family forced out by the police under the command of District Inspector Tyrrell, Ballinamore, who brandished his sword and compelled his men to enter the house, and eject the inmates by force; and whether similar proceedings on the part of the police will be sanctioned by the Executive pending the passage of the Evicted Tenants Bill into law?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is a fact that Carrigan was evicted on the 5th of April. I understand he built a house on the holding over five years ago; that in March, 1889, he paid one-and-a-half year's rent and got a receipt to the 1st of November, 1887; that on the 3rd of December, 1891, he paid one year's rent and got a receipt to the 1st of December, 1886. He has since paid no rent, and was decreed in June, 1893 for 6½ years arrears of rent. Prior to eviction he offered to pay one-and-a-half year's rent, but the offer was not accepted. A number of persons were assembled in the house when the Sheriff and his assistants arrived to carry out the eviction, and prevented them from entering; thereupon, at the request of the Sheriff, three constables went forward to assist the Sheriff, and Carrigan and the other persons assembled left the house quietly. No force whatever was used. The District Inspector informs me that it is not a fact that he brandished his sword, as alleged.

## INDIAN CRIMINAL PROCEDURE.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether a Bill, recently passed in the Viceregal Council to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, contains a provision which makes owners and occupiers of land and their agents liable to imprisonment for one month, or a fine of Rs.500, if they fail to report to the police or a Magistrate the intention to form an unlawful assembly; whether, under the Indian Penal Code, an unlawful assembly would be formed if five persons came together with the intention of enforcing a claim or committing an offence, however petty; whether the Commissioners of Rajshaye and Chittagong, and other officials of experience, together with the leading Indian Associations in Calcutta, have protested against this innovation, pointing out that such an enactment is uncalled for and goes beyond the law existing in any other country; whether the Behar Indigo Planters' Association, in a Memorial to the Government of India, has expressed an opinion that the existing law is sufficient to maintain order, if properly administered; whether the High Court of Calcutta has expressed disapproval of this provision, stating that, having regard to the definition of the offence, private persons, animated by the best intentions, and acting with all due care and attention, would find it difficult to discharge the duty which it is intended to impose upon them; and whether he, on a consideration of these circumstances, will disallow the provision complained of?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: A copy of the enactment to which my hon. Friend's question refers has been forwarded to me in accordance with the law, but I am not yet able to say what course the Secretary of State in Council may take with regard to it. The various points to which the question refers will be duly considered before any decision is arrived at.

### LONDON BRIDEWELL PRISON.

SIR C. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the existence in the buildings of the old Bridewell Prison, London, of a lock-up to which refractory apprentices are committed by the City Chamberlain for breaches of their indentures; whether this lock-up is under the inspection and control of the Home Office; and whether he can state the number of persons imprisoned there during the past three years, and the average period of their detention?

MR. ASQUITH: This lock-up is not a prison coming within the provisions of the Prison Act, but is a portion of the buildings of Bridewell Hospital set apart, under a scheme approved by the Master of the Rolls (under 52 Geo. III., c. 101, and the Charitable Trusts Acts), for the reception of apprentices committed thereto by the Chamberlain of London in pursuance of jurisdiction vested in him in that behalf. The lock-up is not in any way under the inspection and control of the Home Office. The Chamberlain of London informs me that two apprentices were detained in 1891, two in 1892, and one in 1893, the average period of their detention being 10 days. In answer to a question on this subject in March, 1889, my predecessor expressed the opinion that "the Chamberlain's Court is distinguished for its impartial administration and care of the rights of apprentices," and I am not aware of any reason for dissenting from that view.

DR. CAMERON: At whose expense is the prison maintained?

MR. ASQUITH: At the expense of the City.

### SWAZILAND.

BARON H. DE WORMS (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now able to give any further information relative to the state of affairs in Swaziland; whether the Queen Regent declines to assent to the transfer of the government of the country to the Transvaal Republic, and is supported by the Native population and by the bulk of the British settlers; and whether he will present Papers on the subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The whole matter is still in the stage of negotiation. Further Papers will be presented in due course.

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE DUNSHAUGHLIN UNION.

MR. JORDAN (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he make inquiry into the cause of the delay on the part of the Guardians in carrying out the scheme for the erection of labourers' cottages in the Dunshaughlin Union, County Meath, which was recommended by the Inspector after a public inquiry held by the Local Government Board in the locality?

MR. J. MORLEY: In replying to a question addressed to me by the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin on the 19th of April, I stated that the Provisional Order sanctioning the erection of 56 cottages in this Union would be issued as soon as certain documents had been received from the Guardians by the Local Government Board. These documents have not yet been received, and it will be seen, therefore, that any delay in the matter does not rest with the Local Government Board.

### EIGHT HOURS DAY AT WOOLWICH.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Battersea, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the eight hours day has been put into operation in the cannon foundry and certain other departments of Woolwich Arsenal; and, if not, whether he can make a statement to the House as to when the new Regulations will be generally adopted?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: The 48 hours week has now been arranged to apply to the cannon cartridge factory, rocket factory, and the shell foundry, by the men employed therein not being required to work on Saturday. The 48 hours week has thus been made applicable to all but about 300 of the men at Woolwich who are employed on continuous operations—a little over 2 per cent. of the whole number.

Mr. LOUGH: Will the arrangement be extended to the remainder of the men?

Mr. TOMLINSON: Is there any reason to suppose that the new arrangement gives satisfaction to the men?

*Mr. WOODALL: Yes; I am delighted to say that the arrangements under the new system at Woolwich Arsenal are working very smoothly, to the general satisfaction of the men, and with the cordial co-operation of all concerned. The change referred to has not been made without considerable difficulty in the departments referred to, and I am afraid the War Office does not at present see its way to apply the eight-hour schedule in other departments which work under the continuous operation of a 12-hour shift.

Mr. BALDWIN (Worcester, Bewdley): Are the men paid by piece work or by time?

*Mr. WOODALL: A very large proportion of the men are paid piece-work, but the results are equally satisfactory, whether they were paid at a regular rate per hour or by piece-work.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): Have the prices of piece-work been raised since the hours of labour were reduced?

Mr. WOODALL: No; they have not.

## DR. GRIGSBY.

Mr. BALDWIN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies by whom the expenses of Dr. W. E. Grigsby's recent visit to this country have been or will be defrayed; and whether any part of them will be charged upon the contributories to the Solicitors Government Stock Investment Trust (Limited)?

Mr. S. BUXTON: I understand that Dr. Grigsby's expenses were defrayed by himself.

## GERMAN BOATS FOR THE ROYAL NAVY.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many boats have been ordered for the Royal Navy in Germany; how much is to be paid for them from public funds; and if they will be duly stamped "made in Germany;" and what steps were taken to place the order among the unemployed shipwrights at home?

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: At present the exact number of these special life-saving boats cannot be stated. The total number likely to be ordered by contractors for the torpedo-boat destroyers will not exceed 60. The cost of these life-saving boats, as previously explained, will be paid by the contractors for the vessels carrying the boats. For the number mentioned it will probably not exceed £1,000. The boats are patented, and the maker's name will no doubt be on them, but no other description, as they will bear no English names or marks. The boats are not shipwrights' work, nor wood-built. The House will observe that a small order is all that has been given so far. If larger orders become desirable, the Admiralty will, as usual, endeavour to arrange for manufacture in this country. But I repeat what I stated the other day, that it is our clear duty to obtain the best articles and inventions for use in Her Majesty's Navy, whether Foreign or British.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that it is the duty of the Government to obtain the cheapest article regardless of every consideration. Has the right hon. Gentleman any knowledge as to the price of these boats?

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The Admiralty have full knowledge on the whole subject, and have been in communication both with the representative of the inventor in this country and with the contractors. The Berthon boats formerly contracted for were heavier, much more expensive, and less satisfactory than this subsequent invention. The new boats are a marked success, and the Admiralty are satisfied that they are the very best boats.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: Will the contract be laid on the Table?

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I know of no reason why this contract any more than any other contract should be laid on the Table.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what is the size of the boats. I see they are to cost about £16 a-piece. Are they 16ft. boats?

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The first boat cost only £7, but the present boats, which are rather longer—namely, 18ft., cost about £16.

### CASTS FROM THE ANTIQUE AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

MR. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works on what ground the valuable collection of casts from the antique at the South Kensington Museum formed by Mr. Walter Copland Perry, which since 1880 have been exhibited in a large well-lighted hall, have, with the exception of the Parthenon and Phigaleian friezes, been removed into a long dark gallery; who is responsible for the alterations, in consequence of which many of the casts, particularly those of the Æginetan and Parthenon groups, have had to be divided and dislocated; and whether the casts will be replaced in their old position or in some other place where they can be properly seen?

SIR H. HOWORTH (Salford, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, may I ask him whether the most distinguished achæologist in England was not directly responsible for the removal of those casts; whether before removing them he did not consult with nearly all the available people within reach of London who have any special knowledge on the subject; and whether he did not then find that the great preponderance of opinion—in fact, the whole opinion, with the exception of that of one or two—was in favour of this removal, including Mr. Perry himself.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not asking a question, so much as conveying information.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): I am responsible for carrying out the suggestion of the able Director of the Museum, Dr. Middleton, on this matter. The real cause of the change is the overcrowding of the Museum. The collection of tapestries at South Kensington, which is nearly, if not actually, the finest in the world, had never been actually seen, till it took its turn a few months ago in the Court where the casts were. It appeared absolutely necessary to show them to the public, for a time at all events, and I have received letters of cordial approval from several distinguished artists and other authorities. No discourtesy has been intended to Mr. Perry, and there are those who believe that, when the arrangements are complete, the casts will appear not to have suffered so much as has been suggested. There is nothing to prevent the casts returning to their former hall after a time, but I cannot name any particular date.

### THE GUARDS' HOSPITAL AT WESTMINSTER.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the accommodation in the Guards' Hospital, at Rochester Row, Westminster, is sufficient to hold all the sick of the Guards, or is it the case that Guardsmen, ill with contagious diseases, are sent in considerable numbers by train to Military hospitals outside London; what is the number of such sick now so accommodated in outlying hospitals; and will steps be taken to secure a site at Millbank for a central military hospital for London?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The Guards' Hospital in Rochester Row has not sufficient accommodation for the sick of the brigade, and a site has been secured at Millbank for the erection of a hospital to accommodate all the sick of the garrison of London. At present it is necessary to send some of the sick to hospitals outside London; and 109 are at this time so provided for, of whom about 80 per cent. are in the Herbert Hospital at Woolwich. No patient suffering from an infectious disease is sent by train to any destination.

### FOOD ALLOWANCES IN THE NAVY.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty on what scale is the allowances or compensation made to men in the Navy who do not take up the whole of the food allowed; whether they are allowed the full value of the food not taken up; and, if not, why; and what is the annual difference between the value of the food not taken up and the allowance made in lieu thereof?

MR. E. ROBERTSON (who replied) said: The scale of compensation is given in Appendix XXV. of the Queen's Regulations. For some articles the prices paid by the Admiralty are higher and for some lower than the scale. For the sake of simplification the scale of prices is a fixed one. With the fluctuating prices in the market of the numerous articles of food (22) purchased at various stations all over the world it is not practicable to assign the exact value to each article at the time when the compensation is claimed. The information asked for in the last paragraph involves such extensive investigation on account of the purchases made all over the world that the Admiralty do not feel justified in calling for the Return asked for.

### ARTILLERY BANDS.

Mr. G. ALLSOPP (Worcester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps have been taken, or are intended to be taken, to provide military bands to the headquarters of artillery districts at Home stations, at the large artillery garrisons of Malta, Gibraltar, in India, and generally wherever considerable bodies of artillery, mounted or dismounted, are assembled?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: At Woolwich and Aldershot, where there are the largest number of mounted batteries, bands already exist. A scheme for providing bands at a few other stations, where a considerable force of Artillery is collected, is at present under consideration. As regards India, the question is one for the Indian Government.

### TENBURY NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BALDWIN: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with regard to the demand made upon the managers of the Tenbury National Schools, who have been ordered to provide additional accommodation for 50 infants, although at the present time there is provision made for 73 infants with only an average attendance of 63, whether he is aware that, in 1892, a sum of £590 was expended upon these schools to meet the requirements of the Department, and at that time the Department made no demand for such increased accommodation; and whether, under these circumstances, the Department intend to insist upon this new accommodation being provided?

Mr. ACLAND: No demand has been made on the managers of this school. A Census lately obtained from the School Attendance Committee shows that, on a moderate estimate, there are 50 infants in the parish of Tenbury in excess of the existing accommodation provided in the three schools in the district. The managers of the National School, which is the principal one in the parish, have been informed of this deficiency, and have been told that if they do not see their way to supplying it the Department may have to proceed to issue notices in the usual way. A new classroom and offices were built at this school in 1892, but I do not, of course, know how much they cost. There were 95 infants on the books in June of last year.

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE KILMACTHOMAS UNION.

Mr. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the landlord of the lands of Ballyhussa, Kilmacthomas Union, agreed to let on lease half an acre of these lands, occupied by Mr. Sheehan as tenant to the Guardians of Kilmacthomas Union, for erecting thereon a labourer's cottage, and that subsequently Mr. Sheehan purchased his entire holding, including the half-acre rented by the Guardians; whether the vesting order from the Land Commission proves that Mr. Sheehan purchased all his holding; and whether the Local Government Board will consult their Law Adviser with the view of meeting the views of the Guardians, by having the name of Mr. Sheehan inserted in the lease as the owner of these lands instead of the former owner, who sold the lands to Mr. Sheehan?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Board received a communication from Mr. Sheehan to the effect of paragraphs 1 and 2 of the question, and on Monday last they forwarded it to the Guardians of Kilmacthomas Union for their observations thereon. Their reply has not yet been received. With respect to paragraph 3, if the statements made are correct, the matter would appear to be one for the Land Commission, and not for the Local Government Board. When the observations of the Guardians shall have been received I shall, if necessary, refer them to the Land Commission.

### SICKNESS AMONG THE TROOPS IN INDIA.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the serious amount of typhoid fever and other severe ailments among English troops in India, and the absence of any trained nursing corps of orderlies, he will consider the advisability of sending detachments of the Medical Staff Corps to India?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is for the Secretary of State for India to consider whether the Medical Staff Corps should be introduced into India. The expense would be great, and this element in the question would, no doubt, greatly influence the views of the Government of India. In India there are now a native Army Hospital Corps and a highly-trained body of lady nurses, who are available for typhoid fever and other severe ailments.

### FOREST GATE SCHOOLS.

DR. FARQUHARSON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board has his attention been drawn to the fact that an official inquiry held at the Forest Gate Schools in the month of September, 1893, into the circumstances connected with the death of certain children there by ptomaine poisoning, in the month of September, 1893, disclosed grave irregularities in the accounts and in the prescribed dietary; and whether steps will be taken to prevent the possibility of such occurrences in the future, and to protect the children and the public by placing some effective check on the control of the superintendent?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I am aware of the official inquiry which was held at the Forest Gate Schools by one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board into the circumstances connected with certain cases of ptomaine poisoning. The inquiry showed that there had been deviations from the ordinary prescribed dietary, but there was no reason whatever to suppose that there was any connection between those deviations and the cases of poisoning. The evidence also showed that the entries in the accounts did not always accurately represent the facts, although there was no reason for supposing that those entries had been made by the superintendent of the schools with any fraudulent intent. The views of the Board as to these irregularities have been communicated to the managers, and by them to the superintendent, and the Board feel sure that they may rely upon such supervision on the part of the managers in future as will prevent the recurrence of any similar ground of complaint.

### OWNERS OF LAND IN THE METROPOLIS.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will consent to grant a Return of the Owners of Land (Metropolis) (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, "Owners of Land (England and Wales), 1874")?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I think such a Return would be an interesting one, but I am informed that it would be very troublesome and costly to prepare.

MR. A. C. MORTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of completing this Return?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I will make inquiries, and if I find it practicable will have it completed as soon as possible.

### THE BRENNAN TORPEDO.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the total amount hitherto paid to Mr. Brennan and his colleagues as reward for the invention of, or as salary in connection with the manufacture of, the Brennan torpedo; whether the torpedo can be manufactured without the salaried assistance of these gentlemen; what are the conditions, if any, binding the War Office to continue such salaries; what new arrangement as to the continuance or otherwise of such salaries has been entered into; and what is the amount of these salaries?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The total reward, or purchase money, for the invention was £110,000, and the salaries from January 18, 1887, to March 31 last amounted to £22,850, together £132,850. Previously to the first agreement for five years Mr. Brennan had a payment made to him for expenses, &c., of £5,000 in 1883, and of £1,000 a year, as salary, from 1883 to 1887, while developing the invention; but these payments were not rewards or salaries in connection with the manufacture. If they are included, the total payments to March 31 come to £141,850. The engagement of Mr. Brennan and his colleagues terminates on

March 31, 1895; and the War Office is not under any obligation to continue their employment beyond that date. The salaries are two of £1,500 and one of £500. The torpedo can be manufactured without the salaried assistance of these gentlemen; but in such case the Department would lose the advantage of their inventive ability, which has already effected great improvements since the weapon was first adopted.

**MR. HANBURY**: Is it intended to discontinue these payments after March, 1895?

**MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: No decision has been come to on that point.

### WAITERS' WAGES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE** (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee of the House of Commons whether, having regard to the fact that the allowance made to the waiters in the dining room of the House of Commons is 3s. 6d. per attendance, and that they are prohibited from receiving gratuities, whereas the allowance made to waiters for a similar attendance in all the principal Clubs in London, with the exception of the National Liberal Club and St. George's Club, Hanover Square, is 5s. for a similar attendance, he will re-arrange the scale of payment so as to place the waiters of the House of Commons on an equality with those outside?

**MR. CREMER** (Shoreditch, Haggerston): May I ask whether the waiters engaged during the day-time do not receive in addition to this pay three meals a day, while the waiters engaged in the evening have a meal at the end of their service?

**MR. HERBERT** (Croydon): My attention was not called to the question of the hon. Member for West Ham until I heard the question of the hon. Member for Haggerston. It is the fact that the sum of 3s. 6d. for each attendance is paid to waiters who wait in the dining room of the House of Commons. The House is, perhaps, aware that it is impossible to have a full staff in the House, because the requirements vary from day to day, and a certain number of waiters have to be engaged for the dining hours. The sum of 2s. 6d. used to be paid to the waiters, and it has now been raised by 1s. per day. It is certainly true that, in addition to that, those who come for these few hours for 3s. 6d. are also given their suppers. The pay of the permanent staff of waiters varies, I think, from 28s. to 30s. a week and higher, and these servants get three meals a day in addition.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE**: Is it not the fact that all the principal Clubs in London pay 5s. for a similar attendance?

**MR. HERBERT**: It is hardly possible to compare the condition of waiters in the House of Commons to those in Clubs, who are permanent servants. It is impossible to have a permanent staff in the House of Commons.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE**: Will the hon. Gentleman make inquiries as to the payment of waiters employed casually in Clubs?

**MR. HERBERT**: I cannot undertake to go round all the Clubs in London.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE**: Then I will supply the hon. Gentleman with information.

### THE POLICE AND PROCESSIONS.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what authority the police attacked and dispersed a peaceful procession in Whitechapel on the evening of the 1st of May, when a number of people, including women, were kicked and otherwise injured; and whether he will issue such instructions as will prevent the police from acting in the manner above stated?

**MR. ASQUITH**: According to the information before me, the police did not attack or disperse a peaceful procession. So long as the procession was peaceful it was not interfered with; when it became disorderly it was dispersed. There is no evidence before me that any persons were kicked and injured, but there is evidence that an attempt was made to stab one of the police officers.

**MR. KEIR-HARDIE**: Will the right hon. Gentleman cause independent inquiry to be made as to the facts of the case? I have in my possession evidence of a different kind to that which the right hon. Gentleman has just given to the House.

**MR. ASQUITH**: I am inquiring into the case myself, and if the hon. Gentleman will send me any evidence he has I will give it careful consideration.

### WAGES AT ENFIELD.

MR. KEIR-HARDIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a reduction has been made in the wages of certain of the workmen employed at Enfield Small Arms Factory amounting, in some cases, to as much as 11 per cent.; whether the earnings of these men, previous to the reduction, were under 20s. per week; and what necessity there was for making any reduction at this time?

*MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: Some reductions of piecework prices have been made in cases where, in the judgment of the Superintendent of the Enfield Factory, the rates were too high; but no man earning as little as 20s. a week has been affected by the changes referred to.

### BOARD OF AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will make arrangements for specimens or lists of the leaflets issued by the Board to be kept at rural post offices, and for copies to be obtainable through the same source?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I should be very glad if some such arrangement as that suggested by the hon. Member could be carried into effect, and my right hon. Friend (the Postmaster General) has informed me he will be pleased to co-operate with me in the matter. I am very anxious to secure for our leaflets as full publicity as possible.

MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will extend to Members of this House, who desire to distribute the publications of the Board of Agriculture, the privileges now confined to Agricultural Societies, Village Institutes, and similar bodies?

MR. H. GARDNER: I should be very glad, if it were possible, to extend the privileges to which my hon. Friend refers to Members of Parliament and other persons willing to purchase our publications for gratuitous distribution, and I will bring the suggestion under the notice of the Treasury, with whom the decision in the matter would rest.

### SCHOOL BOARD DEBTS.

SIR G. SITWELL (Scarborough): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether there exists any precedent for allowing a School Board to contract a new mortgage debt in building new schools before paying off the debt existing on schools they are abandoning or seeking to abandon?

MR. ACLAND: A hypothetical and very technical question like this is very difficult to answer in general terms. If the hon. Baronet will give me the case he refers to, either by question or privately, I shall be glad to give him a full reply.

### THE BEHRING SEA ARBITRATION.

MR. CREMER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will grant a Return of the cost connected with the Behring Sea Arbitration?

*SIR E. GREY: A Return will be given as soon as the accounts have been completed.

MR. CREMER: Can the hon. Gentleman say when the Return will be completed?

*SIR E. GREY: No. There are a few matters connected with the printing which still have to be settled.

MR. CREMER: Shall we get it during the present Session?

*SIR E. GREY: I should certainly think so.

### SOLDIERS ON THE IRISH MAIL BOATS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade is he aware that the Directors of the London and North Western Railway Company have issued an Order prohibiting soldiers in uniform from travelling by their mail boats between Dublin and Holyhead, and compelling them to proceed by pig and cattle boats; and do the Government intend to make any representations to the Company as to their action in the matter?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Railway Company inform the Board of Trade that down to the end of last month no restriction was placed upon the conveyance of soldiers, whether on furlough or otherwise, by the express boats, although many complaints of their misbehaviour on board and of the annoyance suffered by passengers in consequence had been made from time to time. Further instances having recently come under the notice of the Company's officials at Dublin and Holyhead, as well as on board the steamers, it became necessary in the public interest to intervene and to protect regular passengers from the disorderly scenes of which they were compelled, much against their will, to be eye-witnesses. Orders were accordingly given at the beginning of April that soldiers on furlough, unless observed to be sober and apparently well-behaved, were to be conveyed by the Company's cargo boat, but the restriction does not apply either to non-commissioned officers from the rank of sergeants upwards, inclusive of sergeants, or to soldiers travelling in detachments who are usually accompanied by an officer. The Board cannot take any further action in the matter.

MAJOR RASCH: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire how it is that the London and North Western Railway Company have alone issued an Order so derogatory to the wearers of Her Majesty's uniform?

MR. MUNDELLA: I think that the hon. and gallant Member would do well to read the correspondence with the Railway Company. He will then see what the allegations of the Company are.

MR. W. JOHNSTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the soldiers concerned were Irish soldiers?

[No answer was given.]

### REGISTRATION OF DEBENTURE BONDS.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg to ask the Attorney General whether it is the intention of the Government, at an early date, to introduce a Bill for the purpose of making it compulsory that all debenture bonds issued by Limited Liability Companies should be registered and dealt with in a similar manner to bills of sale?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar): The Lord Chancellor is in communication with the Board of Trade, with the object of ascertaining whether any alteration in the law as to debenture bonds issued by Limited Liability Companies is desirable and practicable.

### THE COINAGE OF SILVER.

MR. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the total amount of silver coined at the Mint during the year ending the 31st of March, 1894?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): The total amount of silver coined at the Mint during the year ending the 31st of March, 1894, was £1,133,154.

MR. SIDEBOTHAM: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what was paid into the Exchequer?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot say that, but it will be seen in the Mint Report.

### COPYRIGHT IN CANADA.

MR. CURZON: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Her Majesty's Government have recently received any communications from the Canadian Government on the subject of copyright; and whether they will present these or any other Papers on the subject to Parliament, in continuation of the Papers last issued?

MR. S. BUXTON (who replied) said: (1) Voluminous Papers have been received which are now under the consideration of the Departments interested in the question of copyright. (2) Papers will be laid.

### MINERS (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will refer the Eight Hours Bill for Miners to a Select Committee of the House, to take evidence and report if it would have any effect, if passed into law, on the price and output of coal?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; we do not see any advantage in referring this Bill to a Committee.

### THE BUDGET PROPOSALS.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that Ireland pays about 8½ per cent. of the present Succession Duty, mostly on realty; whether 8 per cent. of the estimated increased yield of the Death Duties on realty would amount to £105,600; and whether the Inland Revenue Authorities, in estimating the yield of the increased duties from Ireland, have allowed that sum, or, if less, then what sum, as the increase of duties on realty in Ireland?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The amount which Ireland pays under the Succession Duty has been taken into account in calculating the yield of the new Death Duties in Ireland. It is impossible to say exactly in what proportion the increase of duties will be borne by the different parts of the United Kingdom; but the Commissioners of Inland Revenue have no doubt whatever that Ireland will not bear a larger share of that increase than she does of the existing duties.

MR. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in cases of real estate held or purchased by Public Bodies for purposes of investment, such as the Commissioners of Queen Anne's Bounty, Charity Commissioners, and other Corporate Bodies claiming exemption from the operation of the Statutes of Mortmain, and of other Corporations having power to acquire lands, which on transfer to such Corporations in perpetuity are not subject to the incidence of the proposed Estate Duty, he will take steps to subject real estate held by such Corporations to the same burden of taxation as that borne by real estate belonging to private individuals; whether he will consider the question of charging such real estate with Estate Duty at periods corresponding with the average period of human life as a means of effecting this object; and whether he will furnish a Return showing the amount of land and the capital value thereof held by such Corporations in perpetuity?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Act 48 & 49 Vict., c. 51 (Part II.), imposes a duty ("Corporation Duty") at the rate of 5 per cent. on the annual value, income, or profits derived from real and personal estate held by bodies corporate and incorporate. That Act contains an exemption in favour of the Corporations referred to in the question. The present does not seem to me a suitable time for revising the Corporation Duty. In reply to the third paragraph of the question, I beg to refer the hon. Member to the abstract of the Mortmain Return (No. 274) 1882.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Clause 5, Sub-section 2, of the Finance Bill will have the effect of making an executor liable to account for and pay Estate Duty in respect of all personal property whatever and wheresoever situate passing on the death of the deceased, or only in respect of that portion of the property for which he is an executor; and, if only in respect of that portion of the property for which he is an executor, how is it proposed to enforce upon a foreign executor domiciled abroad the liability to account for and pay the Estate Duty in respect of property situate out of the United Kingdom?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No. The clause makes the executor liable to pay the Estate Duty in respect of all personal property (wheresoever situate) of which the deceased was competent to dispose at his death—not on all property passing at his death—which might be a very different thing. It is optional with him to pay on other property passing at his death, but he is not bound to do so. A foreign executor domiciled abroad cannot be compelled to account for or pay the Estate Duty in respect of property situate out of the United Kingdom; but the Estate Duty on the foreign personalty can be paid by the English executor out of the English assets actually received or disposed of by him. His liability is thus limited by Clause 7, Sub-section 3, of the Finance Bill.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then the executor is not liable for the Estate Duty on foreign property?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, he can pay it out of the English assets.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell me how he is going to recover the Estate Duty on foreign property in the event of a foreign executor domiciled abroad?

SIR W. HARCOURT: We shall recover it in the same way as other revenue is now recovered under similar circumstances.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But I want to know how the right hon. Gentleman is going to recover the Estate Duty on foreign property from a foreign executor domiciled abroad?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone that question until the discussion of the Budget Bill.

**MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE** (Hereford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the additional duty of 6d. per proof gallon on spirit presses very unfairly on chemists and druggists, who cannot recover any part of the additional tax without infringing the Sale of Food and Drugs Act; whether he is aware that it has been estimated that the tax will amount to an equivalent of an extra 2d. in the £1 on the average chemist and druggist's income; and whether he will consider if means can be devised so that spirit used in medicine can be subject to a special and lower tax than spirit used as a beverage?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: The distinction proposed in this question is not practicable. The hon. Member will find the reasons why this cannot be done stated fully by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, on May 19, 1890.

### RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

**MR. TOMLINSON**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Government propose that the Debate on the Second Reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill should take place?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: I am afraid that I am not able at present to fix a date.

**MR. TOMLINSON**: May we hope for some assurance from the Government that they will take steps to press the Bill forward?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: I hope so.

### CHARGES AGAINST INLAND REVENUE OFFICIALS.

**MR. HAYDEN**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is aware that, when Inspectors and collectors of Inland Revenue are making inquiries into complaints or charges against subordinate officers of the Inland Revenue, it is their practice to obtain documentary or oral evidence in the absence of the officials complained of; that the nature or substance of such evidence is used against the officials without being made known or communicated to them, or their being afforded an opportunity of proving whether such evidence was true or not; and that from time to time evidence obtained in this way has led to the censuring, reduction, or dismissal of officers of the Inland Revenue; whether this mode of obtaining evidence is legal, and allowed in other Government Departments; and whether he will direct the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to instruct their Inspectors and collectors to make their inquiries in the presence of the officials concerned in future?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: The question does not correctly describe the practice in such cases. As far as possible, such inquiries are held in the presence of the accused officer. Where this is not possible the evidence against him is formulated, and he is given an opportunity of explaining or denying it. He can also produce evidence on his own behalf.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

**SIR MARK STEWART** (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if, in apportioning the time for public business after the Whitsuntide Recess, he will take into consideration the convenience of Scotch Members and not put down Scotch business as the first Order on the first day of the meeting of the House?

**SIR C. CAMERON** (Glasgow, College): May I, at the same time, ask whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Second Reading of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill immediately on the re-assembling of the House after Whitsuntide?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: Yes, Sir; I understand that it will not be convenient to Members from Scotland to discuss the Scotch Local Government Bill on the first day of the meeting of the House, and I will take care that it is not put down for that day.

**MR. W. JOHNSTON**: On what day will the House re-assemble after Whitsuntide?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: I hope on the Monday of the following week, but that must depend upon the progress of business. I hope, however, that nothing will take place to render necessary an alteration of our arrangements. We hope that the adjournment will be from the Friday to the following Monday week, subject, of course, to any changes which I may have to make reluctantly. I purpose on the day of re-assembling to take Ordinary Supply, and the Scotch Local Government Bill on the Tuesday. I hope to take the Committee on the Budget Bill on the Thursday. This arrangement will enable a great many Members to defer their return until that day.

**SIR M. STEWART**: Will there be a Morning Sitting on the Friday before Whit Sunday?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: Yes, Sir; that is our present intention, but these arrangements must depend upon the progress of business. I hope the Debate on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill will not occupy more than two days—Monday and Tuesday—and then I shall be in a position to give hon. Members more definite information.

**MR. SEXTON**: When will the Second Reading of the Evicted Tenants Bill be taken?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone that question. I am anxious to assign an early day to the Evicted Tenants Bill, but I cannot tell at this moment what the day will be.

**MR. LABOUCHERE** (Northampton): May the Debate on Uganda be expected to take place soon?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: That is very problematical. It depends upon the progress of other business. The subject has already been thrown out of its place more than once.

## THE NEWFOUNDLAND TREATY.

**MR. GOURLEY** (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any, and what, negotiations are being conducted between Her Majesty's Government and that of France relative to an amicable settlement of the Newfoundland Treaty obligations; and whether there are any complaints from the inhabitants resident on the Treaty shores relative to the use made of them by the French?

***MR. S. BUXTON**: There are at the present moment no negotiations proceeding. Complaints are made from time to time of individual grievances, but, as a rule, the inhabitants resident on the Treaty shore and the Newfoundland fishermen are on friendly terms with the French fishermen.

*Sir. W. Harcourt*

## A POINT OF ORDER (PERIOD OF QUALIFICATION AND ELECTIONS BILL.)

***MR. GIBSON BOWLES** (Lynn Regis) said, he wished to put a question to Mr. Speaker on a point of Order with reference to the Period of Qualification and Elections Bill. The question was whether that Bill did not go beyond the Order of Leave, and whether, therefore, under Rule 224, which provided that a Bill not prepared pursuant to the Order of Leave or according to the Rules of the House must be ordered to be withdrawn, it would not be necessary to order the withdrawal of the Bill? The leave given was to introduce a Bill

> "To reduce the period of qualification for Parliamentary and local government electors, and to provide for the half-yearly registration of such electors and to provide for taking the polls at a Parliamentary General Election on one day, and to restrict plural voting at Parliamentary elections, and for purposes consequential thereon."

Sub-section (f) of Clause 3 proposed to enact that—

> "The time appointed for the meeting of Parliament may be any time not less than 20 clear days after the Proclamation."

He submitted that the interval between the Proclamation and the meeting of Parliament had nothing whatever to do with any of the purposes for which leave was given to bring in the Bill, and that it was not consequential upon any of those purposes. Sir Erskine May, on page 497 of the 1868 edition of his book, thus dealt with the point—

> "In preparing Bills care must be taken that they do not contain provisions not authorised by the Order of Leave, that their titles correspond with the Order of Leave, and that they are prepared in proper form; for if it should appear, during the progress of a Bill, that these Rules have not been observed, the House will order it to be withdrawn. A clause, for instance, relating to the qualification of Members was held to be unauthorised in a Bill for regulating the expenses at elections. Such objections, however, should be taken before the Second Reading; for it has not been the practice to order Bills to be withdrawn after they are committed on account of any irregularity which can be cured while the Bill is in Committee, or on re-commitment. But, in the case of the Income Tax and Inhabited House Duties Bill, 1871, objection having been taken after the Report, and the re-commitment of the Bill, that the Bill comprised provisions relating to the Inhabited House Duty which were beyond the Order of Leave, and that the Second Reading had been agreed to under a misapprehension of its contents, the Government at once consented to withdraw the Bill."

He submitted that, in the case of the present Bill, the want of agreement with the Order of Leave vitiated the whole of the proceedings. Sir Erskine May also said that, in the case of a Bill which should have originated in Committee of the whole House, inasmuch as it imposed a charge on the taxpayer, all subsequent proceedings were vitiated, and must be commenced again. He would cite three out of the numerous precedents upon the point which were to be found in the Journals of the House. In the case of an Expenses of Elections Bill, 1835, on the Order of the Day being read for its Second Reading, notice having been taken that the Bill contained a clause which did not come within the Order of Leave, it was ordered that the Order for the Second Reading be discharged and the Bill withdrawn. Again, in 1847, on the Order of the Day being read for the Second Reading of the New Zealand Bill, notice was taken that the Bill was not prepared in accordance with the Order of Leave, and the Bill was withdrawn. The third instance was recorded in the Journals of the House of the 11th May, 1871. On the Order for going into Committee on the Income Tax and Inhabited House Duty Bill being read, notice was taken that it purported to be an Income Tax Bill, but that, in fact, it re-imposed the Tea Duty, and it was ordered that the Order for going into Committee be discharged, and the Bill was withdrawn. It was alleged at the time, and he believed it was not disputed, that that particular Bill had been read a second time before being circulated amongst Members, but he submitted that this did not touch the Rule which had been agreed upon by the solemn decision of the House, and which could not be altered, as far as he was aware, by any authority. He submitted that as the provision of the present Bill to which he had referred did not come within the scope of the title; that the clause to which he had referred was no part of the purposes for which leave had been given, and was not consequential—which he submitted meant necessarily consequential—on any one of them, the Order for the Second Reading must be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is quite entitled at any time before the Second Reading of a Bill to call attention to what he may consider imperfections in its title as not concerning the scope and purport of the Bill. I understand that the specific point to which he has referred is this. There is a sub-section of the Bill—Sub-section (f) of Clause 3—which states that—

> "The time appointed for the meeting of Parliament may be at any time not less than 20 clear days after the Proclamation."

The hon. Gentleman says there is no reference to this in the title of the Bill. I may say I have already had considerable difficulty with the title of this Bill, and I will mention one point which has given me particular difficulty. It is with reference to Sub-section (2) of Clause 1, which enacts that—

> "So much of any Act as requires that any person or premises shall be rated, or the name of any person shall be inserted in the rate book, or any assessed taxes on poor or other rate shall be paid for the purpose of entitling a person to be a Parliamentary or local government elector shall be repealed."

The question which was put to me privately, and which I decided privately, was whether this was within the title, inasmuch as there was no specific reference in the title to the rating clauses. I would say first that the title of this Bill is so specific that, having entered into detail, it would naturally cause comment as to why any particular detail has been omitted. In fact, the very specific items mentioned in the title of the Bill necessarily call attention to what has been excluded from the title. I decided, however, in reference to the case I have mentioned, that the rating clauses were intimately connected with the period of qualification. If the period of qualification were shortened from 12 months to six months or three months, that would necessarily affect the question of the rating clauses and the question of the voter being upon the rate book. Now, the hon. Gentleman asks me on another point whether the particular question of the alteration of time between the Proclamation and the meeting of Parliament is included in the title. I am clearly of opinion that it is included in the title, and for this reason. The hon. Gentleman will observe that the words at the end of the title are, "and for purposes consequential thereon." If the words had been "connected therewith" they would have no Parliamentary force or effect whatever; but the words "consequential thereon" make a considerable difference. The hon. Gentleman will ask me why it is consequential, and consequential upon what? The period between the Proclamation of Parliament and the meeting of Parliament has already been the subject of several distinct Statutes. As the hon. Member has stated, the period has been 50 days, 40 days, and 35 days, and it is now proposed to reduce that time to 20 days. The reason for that period between the Proclamation and the meeting of Parliament was this: to give time for the Writs to reach remote constituencies, and to enable Members from all parts of the Kingdom to meet here in sufficient time for the meeting of Parliament, and that they might be able to get here without undue inconvenience; and looking at the state of locomotion in those days, the period was fixed to enable specifically the Member for Orkney and Shetland to get here in time. If it is enacted by a Parliament that there should be a taking of the poll throughout England on one and the same day, and a much earlier day than heretofore, this does away with the necessity for so very long a period elapsing between the Proclamation and the meeting of Parliament. That I take to be the direct and particular reason why the period between the Proclamation and the meeting of Parliament is altered. There would be no force in maintaining the old periods of 40, 50, or even 35 days when all the polls are held on the same day, because with a much shorter period than this it would be possible without inconvenience for all Members of the House to assemble at Westminster. Therefore, I take it that the alteration of the period to 20 days is directly consequential upon the enactment that all the polls shall be taken on the same day. I should like to add that the title of this Bill is unduly specific, and that there is no necessity whatever in the title of a Bill to enter into such particularities. All that is necessary—and it is a much safer process—is that the title of the Bill shall be in general terms and cover the general scope and purport so as to include all the subject-matters comprised in the Bill. In 1854 a Standing Order was passed which enacted that the admissibility of Amendments in Committee should be in future determined, not by the title of the Bill, but by its scope and

purport and substance, and that any Amendments relative to the subject-matter of the Bill should be admitted without an Instruction, and if during Committee any alterations are made beyond the title, then the title of the Bill could be amended. I have stated those facts to the House because a too specific and yet imperfect description may create considerable trouble in the event of there being left out all notice of particular clauses of the Bill. But in this case I think the provision for shortening the period of the meeting of the new Parliament is within the terms of the title and directly consequential on the provision for the taking the polls on one day. For these reasons I am clearly of opinion that the Bill need not be withdrawn and that the discussions on the Second Reading may proceed.

## *MOTION.*

### SURVEYORS' (IRELAND) BILL.

### MOTION FOR LEAVE.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, he wished to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law in regard to the examination and appointment of surveyors in Ireland. The measure could not in any quarter be regarded as in any way contentious. The position in regard to surveyors at the present moment was this: When a county surveyorship became vacant only then and not before could examinations be held for the purpose of testing the fitness of those who desired to fill the appointment. After the examination a surveyor could not be appointed until his examination had been approved by the Grand Jury of the county. It had been found that great inconvenience had followed from that state of things. Attention was called to the inconvenience by Chief Baron Palles in a Charge to the Grand Jury. The alteration proposed was that an examination might be held at such time as the Civil Service Commissioners—and not the Board of Works, which was hitherto the body entrusted with this matter—and the Lord Lieutenant together should agree upon. The result of this examination would be that a list of persons competent and eligible for the office would be framed. What would happen then would be that the Lord Lieutenant would at once nominate for the list so prepared a person to fill the vacancy, and the nomination of the Lord Lieutenant would remain effective unless it was disapproved of by the Grand Jury. As it was at present the nomination was not valid until the Grand Jury had sanctioned it. The change proposed to be made was that the appointment should be valid unless the Grand Jury when next assembled disapproved of it. That was the object of this Bill, and that was the method by which it was proposed to attain it. He thought everybody would feel that the change was one that would be acceptable.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law in regard to the examination and appointment of Surveyors in Ireland."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** was entirely opposed to any tinkering with the Grand Jury laws of Ireland until they were completely dealt with. He did not intend to offer any opposition to the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, but there were so many subjects that needed alteration in Ireland that why the right hon. Gentleman should attach himself to this particular one was inexplicable to him. He trusted that the very proper rebuke that the Speaker had just given to the draftsmen of Bills would be attended to in the title of this Bill, and that there would be no attempt in it to tamper with the salaries of the officers.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I can assure my hon. Friend there will be no such attempt. It is merely intended to amend the law with regard to the examination and appointment of county surveyors in Ireland.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 216.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### PERIOD OF QUALIFICATION AND ELECTIONS BILL.—(No. 161.)

### SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [1st May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And, which Amendment was to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words

"this House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power."—(*Sir E. Clarke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

**Mr. WYNDHAM** (Dover) resumed the Adjourned Debate on this Bill. He said that, as the Representative of men who not unnaturally wished to see the attention of Parliament directed to affairs more immediately affecting their daily life, he submitted on Tuesday night that this Reform Bill of the Government was not less singular in the time and occasion of its production than in the character of the provisions it contained. This Reform Bill, unlike most of its predecessors, had been brought before the House of Commons before, and in place of a number of measures of a social character. Owing to the production of this Bill following upon the use which the Government had so far made of their time, hopes which were aroused before the last Election had been deferred from day to day and from year to year—such hopes, for instance, as that a comprehensive attempt would be made to deal with the Poor Law of this country. These hopes were now as far from fulfilment as ever. The Government loudly disclaimed any undue love of Constitutional symmetry. They said they had no care for the theory of representative institutions, and that all their hearts' desire was set merely upon increasing what he might call the output of Parliament, and yet, paradoxically enough, it was because of their unbounded desire for practical legislation that they had been induced to devote the whole time of Parliament to Constitutional reform. Last year the whole of the Session was devoted to a change in the fundamental lines of the Constitution, not because the Government had some higher and better theory of the kind of Government which should rule over the destinies of the two islands, but merely to relieve the congestion of the business of this House, and again this Session the same story was told. Five whole Parliamentary days had been expended upon altering the Rules which governed the selection of Grand Committees of this House, not because the Government wished to introduce any change into the political relations which subsisted between Scotland and England, but only because they wished a second time to relieve the congestion of the business in this House, to pass measures more abundantly and with greater expedition, and now at the present moment they were to be plunged again into the seething controversies which always raged around questions of franchise and redistribution not, to quote the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Bill, because he was in search of speculative symmetry, but because he wanted to remove a few admitted and practical blots. For all the good which they or their constituents got from this preference of the Government for practical legislation, the Government might be as enamoured of speculative symmetry as was the Member for Bodmin. He passed to the character of the provisions the Bill contained, and in dealing with the four enacting clauses he did not propose to criticise the third clause—namely, that which specified that all the elections should be on one day. That seemed to him rather a matter of public convenience than of political power. But taking the other great sections of the Bill, the first and second clause, which dealt with registration, and the fourth, which abolished plural voting, he should like to say a few words upon the merits of these provisions, looking at them alone, and not judging them as he should afterwards be bound to do, in the light of the omission of any provision in the Bill for giving to England the power to which she was entitled. He would say first, on the registration clauses, that the so-called consequential repeal of the rating provisions was, in his judgment, a very grave experiment. He would only advance one of the many arguments which could be used against it. It seemed to him it cut away one of the guiding principles of the Reform Act of 1885, of which this was an amending Bill. The late Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill of 1884, said that he took his stand upon the broad principle that all capable electors added strength to the State, and he went on to ask who were capable electors. The right hon. Gentleman made the reply "householders." Why did he make the distinction between householders and adults? He did it because he found in the status of the householders a rough-and-ready measure of capacity, because the householder had duties to discharge, and obligations to fulfil, and the contention was that a man who was capable of discharging the duties of a householder was capable also of discharging the duties of an elector. But suppose he was not a capable but an incapable householder? Then this distinction vanished. Upon the merits of the fourth clause, which abolished plural voting, judging it alone, he would only say that no single argument had yet been adduced either by the Minister who introduced the Bill, or the Home Secretary speaking at Plymouth upon this subject, or by any gentleman on the other side, for the clause as it stood in the Bill. They said their intention was to remove from the Register persons who had no real or effective interest in a constituency. Those were the words of the Home Secretary. If the argument that they should remove from the Register persons who had no real or effective interest in a constituency was a sound one, surely the converse must be true that they ought to keep on the Register those persons who had a real and effective interest in any constituency. The late Prime Minister, in 1884, said the whole of his object was to see that those who did not belong to a representative area should not take part in elections held there. But those who did belong to any representative area were entitled to take part in the election of those who were to represent them in the House of Commons; and so far from only disfranchising those who had no real or effective in interest a constituency, he made bold to say that the fourth clause of the Bill as it stood would very often, under many circumstances, disfranchise in all probability the Mayor, and almost certainly half the Councillors of many boroughs who after their ordinary day's work proceeded by train to their residences, which were situated outside the boroughs. In his opinion, it was incumbent upon any English Member to judge of the provisions of this Bill in the light of the omission from it of any provision for giving to England the proportion of political power to which she was entitled by her population. The first two clauses of the Bill, though in form registration clauses, were, in effect, franchise clauses, and turned the potential into the actual elector. On the other hand, the fourth clause was one to disfranchise a number of electors. He must put this point shortly, though he was afraid bluntly. Those who returned him to Parliament — and he shared their opinion—regarded the first two clauses of this Bill as expedients for putting Irish votes on the Register, and the fourth clause as an expedient for taking English votes off the Register. In saying that he did not wish to disparage the Irish voter. He drew no invidious distinction between his political capacity and civil worth and that of the English voter, but he merely stated facts. There was a large Irish element in what might be termed the shifting population of their great towns. In saying that, he was animated by no hostility to Ireland. On the contrary, they had had one long duel with hon. Gentlemen from Ireland over the great question of Home Rule, and they should have another. It was because he was ready to recognise in them courageous, adroit, and skilful antagonists that he claimed the right to fight the next bout with weapons of equal strength. That the fourth clause would tend to disfranchise the English voters was clear even from the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, perhaps the greatest authority in the House upon matters relating to the franchise and the electorate. The right hon. Gentleman said he would show—though he failed to do so—that the abolition of plural voting would not intensify but redress the glaring inequalities from which England suffered. The right hon. Gentleman contended that under a Redistribution Bill the constituencies in which most plural voters lived would not lose political representation, but the mere mention of the constituencies, such as Hornsey and Tottenham, showed they were English constituencies. He said that in these constituencies were the great mass of plural voters. That was his (Mr. Wyndham's) contention. These votes which would be struck off were English votes. The right hon. Gentleman made the distinct admission that there were very few plural voters in Ireland and Scotland in comparison with England. In his humble judgment, in making that admission the right hon. Gentleman gave away the whole case of the Government and abandoned the attempt to meet the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend, which declared that till the inequalities were redressed it was impossible to mitigate other inequalities the removal of which would add to the injustice from which the English voter now suffered. He knew that the Government said that their wish was not to weaken the power of England as against the political power of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, just at the moment when they were trying conclusions as to whether the contract between the two parties should be revised or not. They said that their intention was solely confined to confirming the political rights of the individual. They had their eye fixed on the individual voter, and they said he suffered an injustice from seeing other voters with more votes than he himself possessed. What he submitted to the House was that a Reform Bill which pretended to deal exclusively with the political right of the individual was an absurdity, unless it went the whole length of universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, and minority representation. A Reform Bill on these lines could deal exclusively with the right of the individual voter, for it could make the political power of every voter in the Kingdom equal, but short of that they could not deal with the political right of the voter, unless they dealt also with the facilities for exercising that right and the amount of power which should attach to the exercise of it. That was to say, every Reform Bill must deal with franchise, with registration, and also with redistribution. The whole contention for this Bill rested upon the fact that it was no use to give men the franchise unless they gave them facilities for using it as well, and that was why they brought in a Registration Bill. If the Government said that franchise without registration was a delusion, they (the Opposition) argued that franchise and registration without redistribution were nothing more than a snare. The Chief Secretary did not wish to pursue speculative symmetry, but what symmetry was this? This was the symmetry of a Party catchword of "One Man One Vote," which did not embody the principles which those who heard it were made to believe, which did not give equal political power to the electors of this Kingdom, and which might almost be described as a dishonest attempt to delude the men before whose eyes the Bill had been dangled. The practical blots of the Bill were two—the over-representation of Ireland and Wales, and the misrepresentation of Scotland and Wales. It was, he believed, admitted, that upon a computation of the population, England should have transferred to her 30 Members taken from Ireland and Wales. He turned to what he called the misrepresentation of Scotland. Of the 72 Members returned from Scotland on the ordinary franchise —omitting the Universities—50 were returned in favour of Home Rule and only 22 in favour of the Union. And yet had the representation of Scotland been in conformity to the votes cast at the General Election in Scotland, of these 72 Members 38 only would have been for Home Rule and 34 would have been for the Union. Turning to Wales, the case was even more startling in its intensity. There were 19 county seats, and at the last General Election the Home Rulers polled 63 per cent., and the Unionists 37 per cent. of the votes, and yet the Home Rulers in this House had 100 per cent. of the representation, and more than one-third of the electors who voted at the last General Election had no direct representation at all. It was absurd to settle this question by numbers alone with the complete neglect of Wales. It might be retorted that in England Unionism was over-represented. That was perfectly true, but to nothing like the same extent as Separatist principles were over-represented in Scotland and Wales. To a certain extent Unionism was over-represented in England, and they made no complaint of that. So long as all questions were decided by this House as a whole, these local inequalities tended to redress each other. But what, during the last two years, had been the doctrine and practice of Ministers? They appealed from this House as a whole to the Members in it who came from one particular local area. They told them they were not to exercise their right of judgment upon the question of the Church in Wales because, forsooth, the Welsh representation was almost unanimous upon it. That was to say, the 19 gentlemen who did not represent at all more than one-third of those who voted at the last Election were to have it entirely their own way against the wishes of that considerable body of their constituents. He thought the proposition must be admitted to be absurd. If they were to refer to the representatives of local areas it followed that they must make their institutions far more accurate than they were in detail. This Bill would not do, and they would have to go in for a far-reaching measure of reform, equal electoral districts, and minority representation. He had shown that England did suffer under the representative institutions of this country as they now stood; that the injustice would be immensely aggravated if these three clauses in the Bill were passed unaccompanied by some scheme of redistribution, and he asked whether this was the moment at which Englishmen could afford to give up any share of political power to which they were entitled? They looked to the future, and they knew that the great contract between England and Ireland was again to be the subject of revision in this House. He noticed that hon. Gentlemen who came from Ireland were always accepted by right hon. Gentlemen opposite as the political successors of one Party to the contract; but he had never noticed, except in an occasional indiscretion of the Prime Minister, that the gentlemen who represented England were also recognised as the political successors to the other Party to the contract. If that contract was to be overhauled they could not give up any power to which they were justly entitled. So much for the future; but looking at the past the lesson was as deeply burnt in upon their minds. For two years they had seen the wholesale neglect of almost all legislation that affected the daily lives of Englishmen. And why? Because they had a Government in Office that depended on the over-represented countries of Ireland and Wales and the misrepresented country of Scotland. As an English Member he felt he should have betrayed his trust had he not risen to protest against a Bill which, under the specious pretext of enfranchising the individual, sold the whole nation into bondage.

*SIR H. JAMES (Bury, Lancashire): There are many reasons why I much regret that I am compelled to offer the most strenuous opposition within my power to the progress of this Bill. I had hoped that the Government would, following the course they pursued last year, have introduced a Bill that might fairly be entitled a Bill to reform our Registration Laws, and I say, on behalf of those with whom I act, that we should this year, as we did last, not only have supported them, but have welcomed the Bill if it had been framed in like manner to that which the Secretary of State for India introduced. But this Bill is no Registration Bill. The provisions of registration in it are so dwarfed by the proposed great Constitutional changes that upon a Second Reading Debate we need scarcely take notice of them; they are, I agree, matters well fitted for discussion in Committee, but it is not upon those that we base our position that this Bill should not be read a second time. There are other matters creating such important and radical changes that to them, and to them alone, is it worth while, in the course of this Debate, to take objection. There are some personal reasons—I hope I may be excused to that extent in referring to them—why some of us in this House could never support this Bill. For some years there are some of us who have had certain objects in view. We have done our best to secure the free record of political opinion—the individual opinion of each elector in this country. To effect that object we have endeavoured to secure that there shall be less expenditure at elections. We have endeavoured to secure that each man's vote shall be given uncorrupted and without undue influence. We have endeavoured, with these objects in view, to supplant the former pernicious paid agency that affected our elections, and to substitute therefor voluntary, free, and zealous working. This Bill will undo what we have done. It frustrates every one of such intentions and reverses the results we had achieved. It increases enormously the expense of every candidature, and it gives enormous effect—to an extent, indeed, which I do not think is yet realised in this House—to the pernicious machinery of paid agency. It will make every election no longer the free expression of public opinion, but it will be now a question of the influence that paid and skilled agents can bring to bear in manipulating the constituencies. I undertake to show that the expense of elections will be enormously increased, and highly detrimental to every candidate, especially to those who support democratic principles. Even more clearly can I demonstrate that you are now about to call into existence paid agents on whose services alone you will have in many doubtful cases of elections to rely. By the provisions of this Bill you will, in short, give a power of manipulation that is utterly destructive of freedom of election in this country. Before I proceed to demonstrate the correctness of these assertions I wish to say a few words of a more general character. I am now looking at the provisions of this Bill, and as I read them there arises a somewhat wondering inquiry—Who can be their authors? Last year Her Majesty's Ministers brought in a Bill which was not, as I read it, in the interest of any one Party in the State; but in this Bill that neutral character is abandoned, and all that will help one Party alone is brought into view. Still further comes the conviction as to who are the authors of the Bill when it is seen that there is created a method of voting which must give an immense amount of employment to paid election agents, and, therefore, an increased amount of emolument to paid election agents. Those paid election agents, in the face of Her Majesty's Government, I now charge to be the authors of this Bill. Why is it that the independent registration agent is knocked out of the Bill? It seems as if the Government had received representations from election agents forbidding procedure which should set up an independent election agent and produce a self-acting registration, because then the occupation of the registration agent would be gone. Why is it, I ask again, that the easier method of enfranchising lodgers has disappeared from the present Bill? It cannot be accounted for by the remarkable explanation given by the Chief Secretary for Ireland the other night—that the proposals with respect to lodgers cut so deeply into the franchise that the Government had to drop it. When you are disfranchising the dual voter, and when you are enfranchising short-term and non-ratepaying occupiers, is it not too much to tell us that you cannot register lodgers with greater facility because it cuts too deeply into the franchise? Surely the real truth is that again representations were made from the electioneering agents supporting the Government against greater facilities being given in respect to lodger registration, because they felt it to be a Conservative vote, and therefore they objected to it. I ask, too, with astonishment, why we are to have a double registration? My view is, that it will double the payment of every registration agent in this country, and otherwise necessarily increase the expenditure of every candidate, so giving an enormous advantage to the rich man over the poor one in every election contest. When the Government first considered this question they formed an opinion upon it, and the collective opinion of the Committee of the Cabinet was stated to the House of Commons last year by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India as follows:—

> "If you have two revisions in one year you will be revising practically all the year round. Even in America, where they have the widest and broadest franchise, they only make up the electoral rolls once in a year. At all events, our opinion is that two revisions a year—bearing in mind the fact that we have provided only a three months' qualification, and having regard to cases of removal—could not be carried out, and there would be no great injustice and hardship in confining the revisions to one a year."

That is the view of the Cabinet, but it is not the view of the election agents. So they give us a revision twice a year, which my right hon. Friend said ought not to exist, I do not say for the sole purpose, but with the consequence that these gentlemen will receive a far greater sum of money than they have ever received before. So much for the authorship of the Bill. The object of the Bill of last year was registration; no one can say that is the object of this Bill. No one can doubt that the object of this Bill is to strengthen the Party in support of the Government.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: No, that is not the object

*Sir H. James*

**Sir H. JAMES**: That is the natural result, the only result. It is admitted by their own supporters. Why, Sir, on the occasion of the First Reading I quoted a statement, made by the late Attorney General, who in a tone of exultation stated that on the morrow of the day of his speech a Bill would be introduced in this House which would convert the representation of a strongly Conservative constituency into a Radical representation. If that is to be the result, have you not drawn the Bill producing such a result with that object in view? The Attorney General was in the House shortly after I spoke, and he communicated with his colleagues, but he did not endeavour to alter or to explain away what he had said, and if that result can be produced in a constituency so strongly Conservative as that to which Sir Charles Russell referred, it will produce a like result in many other constituencies where the difference in the strength of political Parties is not so great. So, as the late Attorney General did not reply, I ask some Member of the Government to tell us to what provisions did their late colleague refer when he promised his Radical supporters in Marylebone that the Government would bring in a Bill that would enable those Radicals to be in a majority? My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Maldon (Mr. Dodd) told a meeting of his constituents in substance that under this Bill the Conservative and Unionist Party will have no chance in Romford, and what will be the result in Romford will happen elsewhere. It stands confessed, therefore, that the Government have introduced this Bill either with the object or with the inevitable result of weakening their political opponents and strengthening their own supporters. If there were no other reason for opposing this Bill, I would oppose it on that ground, and I would oppose it on that ground if a Unionist Government introduced it. Such action is contrary to the rule of public conduct, which in later times has controlled the statesmen of this country. I believe it has controlled the statesmen of this country even up to the month of March last. Last year no such Bill as this could have been introduced. The then Prime Minister, with his views of how this matter ought to be dealt with, would never have permitted this Bill to be introduced by the Government and supported by that Government, and it was not introduced. We have had several Reform Bills during the present generation. In 1867 Mr. Disraeli introduced a large measure for extending the franchise. He gave to every householder in the boroughs a vote. Who could say that that was a Conservative measure? It was not introduced as a Conservative measure. Mr. Disraeli was in a minority at that time, and could not have carried a Bill injurious to his opponents, if he would. That Bill passed its Second Reading without a Division; it passed through Committee; the Government, in a minority, carrying Division after Division by means of Liberal and Radical votes. Mr. Lewis Dillwyn, Mr. Michael Bass, and others of the same Radical opinions constantly voted with them, because that Bill was Liberal, and was just to both Parties. And the General Election of 1868 proved, by the immense majority of Liberals returned, that that Bill had not been fashioned in order to support the Conservative Party. A few years passed, and in 1883, 1884, and 1885 there were Bills that went directly to the reform of our electoral system. With regard to the Bill of 1883, I desire to say nothing, except that I know full well that not one single clause of that Bill was ever drawn with the object and purpose of supporting the Party that introduced it. We could not have carried it step by step without the support of the Conservative Party. And, when we were asked by our Liberal supporters to introduce even one single clause supposed to help the Party introducing it, the Prime Minister of that day refused to accept any such clause. I speak of the clause preventing the use of carriages at elections. When we sought to regulate the schedules of expenses, we consulted our opponents and ascertained their views, and that Bill passed to the satisfaction of both Parties in the State. I trust it has been of equal benefit to both Parties. But that was a minor measure. The Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) took personal charge of the great measure, the Representation of the People Act of 1884. I would remind the House of provisions inserted in that Bill which no one will say were beneficial to the Liberal Party. Of course, an extension of the franchise, you may say, is democratic in its operation, and might generally be more welcome to the Liberal Party, the Party of Progress, than to those who are not supposed to progress with equal rapidity; but there was in that extension of the franchise a genuine application of political principles to this extent—that the great constituencies called into existence in the manner defined by that Act would be equally appealed to by men of every Party. But when it was suggested that justice required that a new franchise should be created—namely, the service franchise—representation was made that that service franchise would be a Conservative franchise, that it would be a dependent vote, that men employed more often by the wealthy than by the poor, would probably add to the strength of the Conservative Party. The Prime Minister cared not one jot for that fact, but accepted the service vote because he thought it right and just that those men should receive that franchise. I digress for a moment to say that I treat this Bill as a disfranchising Bill of the most acute kind. ["No!"] I do not care to play with words. Whether you wholly affect a voter's power, or whether you take away one vote from him, disfranchisement is the result. If a man is a dual voter—if he has two votes, one in one constituency and one in another, he is a voter in both. If you prevent him from voting in one constituency you disfranchise him in that constituency, and the justice, right, and policy of such disfranchisement should be established before a procedure of that kind is adopted. I know my hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) dissents very much from that view. Let me suggest to him that if he happened to be walking through the streets of London with two watches, and a gentleman of acquiring habits—[*Cries of* "No!"]—took one watch out of my hon. Friend's pocket, and left the other, would he not be dispossessed of his watch? It is not the less dispossession because one watch is left, and I put it to the hon. Member who thought it right to interrupt me whether that is not a fair example of what has been done in this case? I treat this Bill as a disfranchising measure. I said so on the First Reading, and I repeat it to-day, and I contend that the justice of disfranchisement and the policy of disfranchisement have to be established to the very full. May I recall to the memory of the older Members of the House—and I suggest to the younger Members the advisability of reading it—the speech of the right hon. Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone) when he introduced the Bill of 1884? It was a wonderful exposition of the condition of our system, a wonderful treatment of our franchises and their different effects. It was at the end of that speech that he made the proud boast that "This Bill disfranchises not one single man." Let me remind those who know that Bill of the strange extent to which my right hon. Friend carried that view. In those days there was a disreputable class of voting in existence, the worst kind of faggot voting—the creation of rent-charges out of a house or land by which persons totally unconnected with the house or land were enabled to vote in counties. It represented an incorporeal hereditament; it had no substance, paid no taxation, bore no rate, and it was, of course, the creation of the Party wire-pullers. My right hon. Friend, on the day he spoke, had in his possession a photograph of a tenement not of a very pretentious character, the rent being some £100, and 45 votes had been created by rent-charge by the occupier of the house, and 45 had voted at the county election by virtue of the rent-charge so created. Of course, that was a faggot system that ought to be put an end to. What course did my right hon. Friend take so as to justify his boast that he disfranchised no man? In the first place, when dealing with these rent-charges, he preserved and protected all rent-charges that had come to the voter by either settlement, descent, or bequest, but in respect either of those very faggot votes the right hon. Gentleman, in effect, said—"There shall be no disfranchisement. I will preserve every one of these men upon the Register until he dies." That was with the full acquiescence of his colleagues. In 1885 there was another great measure introduced—the Redistribution Bill. That Bill was a monument of industry and of organisation of detail, and it was the Bill essentially of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke). But there is a greater monument contained in that Bill, and it is the impartiality with which that Bill was drawn, so that no one could complain with reason that there was any attempt to obtain any advantage from the distribution of local areas, to one Party or the other. Such till now has been the method on which we have carried out these electoral reforms. According to the rule of perfect political honour which has been acted upon, the Party in power, with a majority at its back, has no right to use its majority to strengthen itself and weaken almost to destruction its opponent. If once you commence this mode of warfare, reprisal will set in which will be a disgrace to our public life. I have made my protest, as far as I am entitled to do so, on the ground of that boast of the late Prime Minister that no man should be disfranchised, and now I will, as briefly as I can, refer to those matters which I have already touched upon, when I said this Bill will destroy the effect of voluntary effort, and will allow a new system of electioneering of a dangerous and injurious character to come into operation which will act against the voice of those who wish to record their votes freely. I hope the House will forgive me if I enter into detail. No doubt Members will say I am putting certain puzzles before them. But what is a puzzle to them will be no puzzle to the election agents. They will understand me well enough; and if I am not more explicit and explain myself with a greater amount of detail, it is because I do not wish to give them more information than probably many of them have at the present time. The point I wish to make is that for the future our elections will become not a question, in the electoral race, of the best horse winning, but a question of jockeyship, and jockeyship alone. The man who wins a race other than by a head will always be a bad jockey, for in so doing he will be expending strength that ought to be used elsewhere. As I shall demonstrate, the result will depend not upon the majority, but upon what some will call cleverness and others will call cunning in the election agent. Let me explain the change that is to be made by the new system. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary cannot, I think, when he spoke, have had in his mind the full effect of this Bill. When he spoke of getting rid of the ownership vote he spoke of persons who journey only on the day of the election into the constituencies. He was talking of a general principle in respect to absent voters, with which many persons may agree, and which they would like to see carried into effect, but which is not carried into effect in the Bill. But we have also to deal with a different class of voters, and I am bound to say that I do not think my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary fully understood what an occupation voter meant. However, in addition to the ownership voter, who does not exist in boroughs at all, there is a class of voter who was called into existence by the wisdom of Parliament, whose position has not hitherto been considered an anomaly, but whose position has been from time to time secured by Parliament when the question of the franchise came before it. The Reform Act of 1832 allowed a new franchise to be created, the principal franchise. To the holder of every tenement, or tenement and land, of the value of £10 a year in a borough a vote was given; and although he did not dwell in the tenement if he resided within seven miles of the borough he had a vote. Will the House consider what that meant? It meant the enfranchisement of every man carrying on business in a borough. At the time that vote was created such voters were not very numerous. But times have changed. The habits of men have changed, and the conditions of industry have changed, and men who are able to do so have been induced to leave the great and crowded centres of industry in order to live in the country. So that there is now an enormous body of men who reside elsewhere than at their places of business who go into the great towns by day for trade or business and return to their family residences in the suburbs in the evening. Few professional men in large towns—lawyers, accountants, surveyors, or merchants or large tradesmen—live now in the places where they carry on their business. These men, who have enjoyed a separate vote in the county for their residences, represent the industry and the middle classes of the country. They represent the class of men who were given the vote in 1832, and I suggest that it is for reasons which emanate from the minds of election agents that the Government are now seeking to disfranchise them. The occupation vote which originally belonged to the borough only was extended in 1867 to the counties with a £12 occupation value instead of £10. In 1884 the Prime Minister reduced the £12 value to £10 in his Bill, and he did more, for whereas for the borough occupation franchise you require to have a residence within seven miles, in the county the right hon. Member for Midlothian got rid of that condition, and the occupation county voter may live where he likes, no matter how far distant. Parliament has allowed that vote to remain, and there has been no whisper against this class of voter until this new order of electoral things arose which clusters around the name of Newcastle. You are about now to disfranchise, or partially disfranchise, this class of men who live in the country and carry on their business in the towns. The Government might be right or wrong in effecting this disfranchisement; but I say that before doing it they ought to have ascertained and known the extent to which they were going in this work of disfranchisement. It seems to me that the course they have taken is a most perfunctory way of dealing with a great alteration and displacement of political power. In the circumstances, I contend that it is almost an insult to the House for the Government to say, as the Chief Secretary did say, that in this matter of disfranchisement they have no information to give. They say, when questioned, that they do not know the extent of the disfranchisement—that it may be small; but that is a kind of answer that ought not to be given by a responsible Government. I have endeavoured to obtain some estimate of the number of this class of votes. I do not of course pretend that the estimate I shall give is absolutely correct, or that it will apply to the country as a whole. The figures I shall give relate to a very important constituency in the North of England, and I have the return from the Member of that constituency, who vouches for its accuracy. I may say at once that I do not give the name of the place, because I do not want to tell the election agents where they would be able to do the most work of manipulation. I do not want to tell the sportsman where the hot corners are and where the game is. In this constituency there are 11,095 persons capable of voting. Of this number 5,673 are non-resident voters; that is to say, more than 50 per cent. of the constituency. I do not say that all these non-residents are necessarily dual voters, but the great majority of them are, and they are composed of commercial and professional men who carry on business in the town and live in the country. These men this Bill will disfranchise.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): No. They will have one vote.

Sir H. JAMES: The Bill will disfranchise them in the sense which I have explained. One vote at least will be taken from them. I do not wish to overstate the case. I know that the figures for the town I have referred to are very high, and of course certainly much higher than the average for the whole country, for there are many towns which are not commercial centres but country towns where the class of men I refer to would not be found in large nnmbers. But why, and for what reason, should the House have to proceed in the dark in this matter? Full information ought to be before us. In his speech in 1884 the right hon. Member for Midlothian gave every detail of every alteration he then proposed to make in the franchise. He never ventured to ask the House to effect an alteration by legislation until he could put before it the full effect of that alteration. But here the Government are reduced really to a position of absurdity when they say, practically, "We have no information to give you." Moreover, we are here dealing with the most important portion of our electorate, and, I think, the most meritorious portion. Still, though I do not wish to enter into a discussion as to the merits of the different classes of voters, I do say that, as you are going to disfranchise one portion of a constituency and to enfranchise another portion, you ought at least to be careful that you do not disfranchise and destroy all that is stable in the electorate and enfranchise all that is shifting. That will be the result of the Bill, and the reason is this. The voters to be disfranchised represent the middle class, and so long as that middle class supported the Liberal Party there was no attempt made to wound it. But since 1886—and every supporter of the Government knows it—by degrees that middle class has been drifting slowly but surely away from the Gladstonian Party; and when that time has come then that Party, with the aid of the democracy, attempt to use the power of that democracy which the middle class enfranchised in order to destroy the voting power of the industrial middle class of this country. Lastly, I wish to show that by means of this disfranchisement there is an opportunity for manipulation of a singular kind, which the Government, I am certain, has never yet dealt with in their counsels, and have not thought of in order to see what effect would be produced by the Bill. I cannot do better than give two instances out of many of this system of "jockeying." I take a borough surrounded by a county, the usual case where the borough vote is strong in occupation and is surrounded by the rural districts—the case of an occupying householder who spends his day in the town and his afternoons and nights in the rural portion of the county where he has his residence. I take this example of a borough surrounded by a county with a Unionist vote of 5,500 and a Gladstonian vote of 5,250. The surrounding county shall be taken to have the same numbers and same proportion of Party voters. In those constituencies there are 2,000 occupation voters—not an undue proportion—and 1,000 shall belong to each Party. By your system an elector at the General Election will only be able to vote in one constituency. I will suppose, following natural gravitation, that out of 1,000 occupation votes belonging to each Party 500 would vote in the borough and 500 in the county, and the result will be that you will get both in the borough and the county a poll of 5,000 Unionists and a poll of 4,750 Gladstonians, or Radicals. Now, that is the natural result in both constituencies, and it thus happens that in both the Unionist candidate obtains a majority of 250, and you get two Unionists returned. But let me assume that you have a very clever Gladstonian agent, and that this gentleman, after making his calculation, knows that he cannot succeed in either of the constituencies. He will say, "This will never do; I am going to lose both elections; but in order to prevent this I have only to obtain good organisation among my dual voters; I will get them in hand." Without letting his opponent know, this gentleman sends for the electors and says to the 500 borough Gladstonian occupation voters, "Do not vote in the borough at all." What is the result? The 4,750 Gladstonians in the borough are reduced to 4,250; the election would be lost on the natural vote, and all that he has done is to make the minority smaller by 500 votes. But while the agent says to the electors, "Do not vote in the borough," he at the same time adds, "Be good enough, all of you, to vote in the county;" and 4,750 Gladstonian voters become 5,250 in the county, while the Unionists poll their normal strength of 5,000. My hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland says that all this has been done before. That is a fallacy. You have never told an elector not to vote in one election and to vote in another. Hitherto, no possible benefit could accrue from a man not voting. I claim that this is a demonstration of mere manipulation of a majority in each constituency, and that you are going to allow with the greatest facility a mere manipulator to work his voters in a manner that no one can anticipate, that no Opposition can fight with, and so as to make it, not a matter of numerical majority, but of detailed ingenuity which is not in accordance with our Constitutional system. I will give one other example. Let me assume that the time is coming when a General Election is about to take place, as it sometimes does after the financial year, in May or June. In the month of February or March a vacancy occurs through death, resignation, or, say, the appointment of a new Solicitor General. Nowadays we welcome new officials, and sometimes Members are so popular on both sides of the House that their re-election on promotion is not opposed; but if this system prevails you may now be having an election in the Dumfries Burghs. I will again assume the case of two constituencies with 5,500 Gladstonians and 5,250 Unionists in each, each party having 1,000 dual votes, and that the Unionists have a clever agent. A bye-election for the borough is announced. In ordinary circumstances that election would not be contested; but in the case I am supposing the Unionist agent says, "I will fight it," and the contest takes place. The Unionist agent is confident, in his public expressions, that he is going to win; the Gladstonians are, to use a sporting phrase, "all out"; they go and vote enthusiastically, and poll 5,500 votes. The Unionist agent says, "I have got 1,000 dual votes in these constituencies; let the Gladstonians win in the borough; I will not poll any." While the Unionist through this abstention polls 4,250 votes, the Gladstonian polls 5,500, and wins by 1,250. Then the day of reckoning comes. A General Election comes, and those unfortunate Gladstonians who had polled at the bye-election in the borough are disqualified and disfranchised. The Unionist agent says, "I will now win the county election." The Gladstonians who had polled 5,500 have lost their 1,000 dual votes, and they now number 4,500, while the Unionists are 5,250. But in this instance the Unionists poll all the 1,000 votes, for they had not voted in the borough bye-election, and the Unionist agent wins the county election by a majority of 750 votes, and all by this manipulation under the Government Bill. I hope that this instance will represent the true nature of the Bill, and I hope the Chief Secretary will explain those figures away. I ask him to obtain some other figures if he can, or to say whether he approves this destruction of the right of a majority, not by argument, not by appeals to the intelligence or to political thought, but by the action of a new class of men who, coming into existence, establish a school of jockeyship and overrule the free expression of political opinion. It has been asked in the course of the Debate, "What is the difference between two votes in one constituency and one vote in two constituencies?" To my mind, the difference is everything. Say that a voter in one constituency has great commercial interests, that he is interested in factory legislation, the marking of goods, or the prevention of nuisances connected with factories. This man looks for a representative in that constituency in order that this interest might be properly represented and in order that the member may be a spokesman of that interest in the House. The same man goes into another county, and he is an agriculturist; he has other interests, and he wishes to choose a Representative who will be a good agricultural Member. But I do not see why in one constituency you should give a man two votes. Every borough is one constituency, however divided. You have the same interests all through. What is the difference between a manufacturer in one part of Birmingham and a manufacturer in another part? They are in one and the same community, with one rating power; and in the Act of 1885 we declared, for good or for evil, that every borough should be one constituency, and that for many purposes the election should be one election. Therefore, we do not give two votes in one constituency. But that is no reason why we should not allow a man to have a vote in a borough and in a county constituency too—to possess only one of them and to be disfranchised with the other. Sir, my part in the discussion on this Bill has occupied so much time already that I will only add very few words with regard to the second part of this Bill—I refer to the question of expense. I deprecate as strongly as I can this increased expenditure. I know what the effect will be. There will be more money spent, probably not at the acute time of an election—for the Act of 1883 prevents that—but in the work of the registration agent. This Bill is going to increase that expenditure enormously. Of course, the Government has given us no estimates, and I think we ought to have had some more information on this point. But I have a Return of the official expenditure on registration within the area of the County of London, and from which it appears that £28,800 is spent on each registration. You are going by this Bill substantially to double that figure; and that is the public expense only. It is small compared with the expense of paying that class of men who will, in the words of the Secretary of State for India, "be registering all the year round." They will claim that, instead of appearing at one registration, they shall be made permanent agents, to be paid all the year round. The rich man may be able to bear that expense, but the poor man will have no chance, for he will never be able to bear it. There are some other topics on which I should like to touch; but I have placed before the House my main reasons for opposing this Bill. There will be in the minds of many people the paramount feeling of the unfairness of this Bill—the feeling that it is an attempt to use a temporary power to gain a permanent political Party advantage. Entertaining that view, as I do strongly, once again comes to my mind the speech made by the late Prime Minister in 1884. I wish I could infuse the spirit of that speech alike into the Government and their supporters. It was a lofty treatment of a great question. The late Prime Minister made two appeals. The first to his opponents. He said, in effect—

> "I have dealt fairly with you. I have endeavoured to obtain no advantage over you. I have disfranchised no one, and vested interests have been respected."

Then he turned to his supporters behind him and appealed to them to like effect—

> "I ask you to accept a moderate and just Bill—just to our opponents; and if you will be satisfied with a measure framed in that spirit, you will have added one more claim to gratitude for your acts—you will have added one other measure to those which the Liberal Party have placed on the Statute Book of this country; and you will be able to read your history in a nation's eyes."

Will the promoters of this Bill ever be able to read their history in a nation's eyes? The nation's eyes will be opened, but whether they be closed or open the nation will be able to read the history of this Bill, its motives and its objects. It will be in vain for its promoters to attempt to deceive any one. It will be in vain in such circumstances for even the chiefest amongst them to travel through the country and endeavour to seduce the rank and file of our Party away from their party allegiance. The most humble among us, the veriest drummer-boy in the ranks, will know that the muniments that the Government boast of are false; that their copyright is spurious, and their title-deeds are defaced. For it has never been given to them to substitute for the efforts of statesmanship the methods of petty Party chicanery.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The schism in the Liberal Party on the Home Rule Question has produced some political surprises and has recalled some startling contrasts. But I think that the history of that unhappy controversy has furnished nothing more amazing than the speech to which we have just listened. My right hon. and learned Friend has alluded, and I shall have to allude again, to the Debates of 1884. He has alluded to the fact that a great many of those who took part in those Debates are not now Members of the House, and that those who were then present are a diminishing quantity; but those of us who do remember that great controversy have not yet forgotten that the ablest lieutenant of the late Prime Minister in that memorable campaign, the colleague who combined the consummate knowledge of the lawyer, the political principles of the genuine Liberal, with the brilliant advocacy of the leader of the English Bar, was the then Attorney General, the present Member for Bury. I have not forgotten the powerful speech with which he closed that six days' campaign. I have not forgotten how he tore to tatters the arguments of the Opposition of that day, how he denounced the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's for making a speech that was precisely on the lines and in the style which we have heard just now, and how he declared that speech to be a speech that no man claiming to be a Liberal ought to have made. Well, Sir, to-night the same Opposition, led by the same Leaders, fighting the same issue, using the same arguments, advocating an Amendment in almost identically the same words, has now the unequalled advantage of my right hon. Friend's advocacy. He was their ruthless antagonist; he is now their devoted ally. I will only remind him once more of that oft-referred-to Indian tribe who, in the vicissitudes of their faith, "adore the gods that they have burnt, and burn the gods that they have adored." But my right hon. Friend has rebuked the Government—he will pardon me for saying so—in phrases which I think he was hardly entitled to use. He is perfectly at liberty to attack our policy; he is perfectly at liberty to denounce us as a discredited and incapable Ministry; he is perfectly at liberty to endeavour to turn us out of Office; but he is not at liberty to misrepresent our actions; he is not at liberty to impute to us dishonourable motives. We have a right to the same consideration from him and from hon. Members in all parts of the House as I trust we give to those from whom we differ, but whom we credit with as much conscientiousness as ourselves. But my right hon. and learned Friend has to-night been very indignant on the question of the dual vote and on proposals of Her Majesty's Government. The House might think that my right hon. and learned Friend always entertained these opinions; that this was the creed of his youth and of his manhood: that he as a statesman had always been an advocate of the great non-disfranchising policy which he exaggerated so brilliantly to-night. But in the Debate to which I have alluded, one of the antagonists who dealt with my right hon. Friend was a leading Member of the then Opposition—Sir Richard, now Lord Cross. Sir Richard Cross proceeded to deal very freely with the hon. and learned Attorney General; and he quoted from a speech of his which I candidly confess I have not been able to find; but as Sir R. Cross quoted from it in the presence of my right hon. Friend, who did not contradict it, and as he also made references to it in speeches addressed to his constituents, we are bound to assume that he was quoting my right hon. Friend correctly. The words of the then Attorney General quoted by Sir R. Cross were—

> "The hon. and learned Attorney General said in his speech that he could not defend the dual vote anywhere; although men might have property in several counties, he (the hon. and learned Attorney General) would not defend their having more than one vote in one place."

SIR H. JAMES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the latest application of the faggot system?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: No; that was not so. I shall be able before I sit down to show that many Members of the House expressed a strong opinion on dual voting in that Debate, and were dissatisfied with the policy which the Government was pursuing; but my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian indicated that that was not a final settlement, and Lord Cross, alluding to what was coming in the future, said—

> "That, I take the opportunity of saying, is the disfranchisement of property."

Then the hon. and learned Attorney General went further, and said he must apply this proposal to the Universities; and if the question were raised about the Universities, he did not see how he could defend the present system.

> "He did not see how he could defend it any more than he could defend the right of the freeholder;"

and, said Lord Cross—

> "I take the opportunity of saying that is the disfranchisement of learning as well as the disfranchisement of property."

That formed no inconsiderable part of Lord Cross's answer to my right hon. Friend. Now, I am not going to deal with those extraordinary conundrums which my right hon. Friend has given us. I confess that they were beyond my power of comprehension. I did not understand them and I do not now understand them; but I have no doubt that, as my right hon. Friend has submitted them with the weight of his great authority, that they were genuine. He asked a question as to manipulating the votes in counties. I suppose it would be possible in the future, as it has been in the past, so to manipulate the voting in both boroughs and counties as to produce an unfair result. But my right hon. Friend forgot one point. He gave us illustrations of the manufacturer and the merchant living outside the locality where their works were carried on or their places of business situated, and he alluded to the case of Birmingham, where he said a man could have only one vote. But had he not forgotten that Edgbaston was within the borough of Birmingham, and therefore that the distinguished mill class of which he spoke in Birmingham had not the advantage of the dual vote? The point of his argument was that there was something in the industrial middle class of this country which entitled them to the possession of a double vote. But I was at a loss to understand the exact bearing of my hon. Friend's speech upon the Amendment before the House which he has so strongly supported, and for which I presume he is going to vote. I should just for a moment like to recall the attention of the House to the Amendment. It is this—

> "That this House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representation of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power."

The hon. Member for Dover, who preceded my right hon. Friend, made his great complaint against the proposals of the Government—not this mysterious manipulation of votes by an unprincipled and incompetent Government—but that the Government have proceeded with a measure for enfranchisement without, at the same time, submitting to the House a measure for the redistribution of the electoral power. Now, I should like to point out, in the first instance, that there is no novelty in the proposal of the Government, and that this question of redistribution is a time-honoured weapon of the Conservative Party, and has been used by them whenever the question of electoral reform has been introduced in this House. It is the first line of defence against the Democracy. It was used in 1831, in 1832, in 1866, and in 1884, and the Amendment of Lord John Manners in 1884, against which my right hon. Friend delivered so powerful a speech, was—

> "That this House declines to proceed further with a measure having for its object the addition of 2,000,000 voters to the electoral body of the United Kingdom until it has before it the entire scheme contemplated by the Government for the amendment of the representation of the people."

The noble Lord and his colleagues spoke and voted in favour of that Amendment.

Sir E. CLARKE: That was in 1884, and we got what we wanted.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: One of the most powerful speeches on that occasion was made by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who used in 1884 the same argument as he has put forward now. The right hon. Member for Bury asked the House to read the speech of the Prime Minister of that day, and he quoted with approval from that speech. Many Members of the Opposition, I am glad to see, have suddenly discovered the infallible wisdom of the right hon. Member for Midlothian. I think if he could come back at present to this House and hear how those who, when he was here, did not by any means speak of him in these terms have changed their opinion, and if he could see to what a pedestal they have raised him, it would be some consolation to him in his present retirement. I quite agree that that was a very marvellous speech of the Prime Minister's. He knew that the whole strength of the Opposition would be devoted to endeavouring to resist that measure by raising this question of the redistribution of electoral power. He said—

> "Our endeavour has been to inquire what was practicable, what were the conditions under which we have to move and act in the present state of public opinion and of Parliamentary

business. We have heard in former years, and may possibly hear again this year, something of what are the consequences of 'deck-loading'—we have determined not to deck-load our Bill; we have a sufficient cargo."

Then he went on to say that—

> "Experience has been gained since 1866, and we find that confident, sanguine, and perhaps a little ferocious, as our opponents were before we introduced the Redistribution Bill, when we introduced it their opposition became keener than ever. . . . . It is impossible not to observe this fact, that of the many political crises produced in connection with reform every one has resulted from proposals for redistribution and not for enfranchisement."

As I have said, in 1884 the late Prime Minister was confronted by the whole strength of the Opposition in their endeavour to arrest the progress of his measure, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Bury knows perfectly well that the Prime Minister of that day declined to walk into the trap that was set for him. Mr. Bright described the Amendment of Lord John Manners as an insidious one, and Mr. Forster expressed his strong disapproval of it, and urged the Government to stand firm to their plan for improving the electoral franchise without touching the question of electoral distribution. But, besides all these, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham made a speech which I should like to quote. I am not at all quoting it as a *tu quoque*, or in the sense that he has changed his opinions, but as exactly representing the present situation. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Chamberlain), speaking in this House on March 27, 1884, said—

> "If I were to suppose that the Opposition were really hostile to the extension of the franchise, were distrustful of their fellow-countrymen, and were not willing to extend the limits of political freedom, while at the same time they were unwilling to commit themselves to any irreconcilable antagonism to the people to whom at no distant day they may have to appeal for support—if I were to imagine that on this question they were 'willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,' what would be the policy I should attribute to such an Opposition? What is the natural course they would take? I suppose it would be their business—it would be their interest—to minimise the importance of the reform proposed for the acceptance of the House, to deny altogether the interest the country would take in it, and at the same time to magnify and exaggerate the gravity of all the complications which might arise while it was under discussion. I assume that they would take every opportunity to delay the discussion of the Bill by interposing debates upon every conceivable subject and at all possible times; and, above all, I conceive they would strive to stifle the consideration and deliberation of a Bill which is a very simple measure, raising but few questions of principle which could be easily decided, by endeavouring to import into it the consideration of an elaborate scheme, full of details, which might easily arouse and perhaps offend local susceptibilities and local interests. That seems to me to be the course an Opposition would take in the circumstances I have described, and that is the course the Opposition has taken in reference to the present Bill."

Well, the House refused on that occasion to accept the policy then put forward by the Opposition. Let me ask why should we accept it now? As I said before, I do not admit that this is a Reform Bill at all. I do not admit that it is either an enfranchising or a disfranchising Bill. It will add to every existing constituency additional voters, but nobody knows the extent of that addition, and, until it is known, how can you legislate as to redistribution? Let me now come to the Bill itself. It makes three proposals. In the first part it deals with registration exclusively; in the second part it requires a voter possessing more than one qualification to select from time to time the qualification or place in respect of which he will vote during the current Register; and, in the third place, it provides that all General Elections shall be held on one day. The right hon. and learned Member asks us to arrest the progress of this Bill and to refuse the Second Reading unless a fourth subject, which is not included in it, is added, but he has not established the case that you must adopt every portion of a Bill if you adopt it as a whole. I will put a case which occurred in this House. Last Session I had the honour of introducing the Local Government Bill, the first part of which dealt with the constitution of the new local governing authority, and the second part was a reform in the administration of the Poor Law. The Opposition of the day maintained that those two questions were absolutely distinct, and ought not to be included in the same Bill; but they did not propose on that ground to throw out the Bill on the Second Reading. They consented to the Second Reading of the Bill, and reserved to themselves the right to set out their objections to the Poor Law portion of the Bill when the Committee stage was reached. Similarly, a man may approve of the registration part of this Bill and may be against the abolition of the multiple vote, but that is no reason why he should not vote for the Second Reading of the Bill and deal with the part to which he objects when it is reached in Committee. I cannot, therefore, admit the force of the Amendment, which asks the House to reject the Bill because objections are urged against certain portions of it. I will not trouble the House with reasons in favour of the registration part of the Bill. I think it was the Leader of the Opposition who said last year that it would be an outrage to maintain the present system by which a man may be the occupier of a house for two and a-half years before he can get a vote. I gather that we are agreed on the point that the registration ought to be improved. Then we come to the next point of the Bill, which has to do with the payment of rates. The right hon. and learned Member objected to the abolition of the rating qualification. My answer to that is that that qualification was abolished in 1869, was again practically swept away in 1884, and at the present moment it is a cumbrous, antiquated provision, which secures nothing and complicates everything. The compound householder's vote is secured to him beyond all dispute, and if you apply the principle of rate collecting it will affect only houses of a higher class. It is the duty of the rate collector to collect the rate, and you ought not to make the machinery of a man's political franchise depend upon his having paid one particular species of debt. To be consistent you ought to attach the same condition to the payment of his rent; but there is no provision for disfranchising him for non-payment of rent. The real qualification is occupation of the house, which means ownership or occupation. I assume my right hon. and learned Friend does not attach much importance to that. One word about the acceleration of registration. My right hon. and learned Friend has made very merry over the extra cost which he says the second registration will involve. I do not agree with the figures which he has presented to the House. I do think that the cost will increase to some extent. Additional fees will have to be paid to the Revising Barristers, but they will not have to do double the amount of work. The work will be divided into two halves of the year, and a very small additional remuneration will be sufficient for the Revising Barristers. The main cost is in the cost of printing; but if, under one of the clauses of this Bill, the printing be placed under the control of the Central Authority in the district, so as to do away with the double printing, the saving will far more than outweigh the extra cost. My right hon. and learned Friend was extremely severe upon our want of statistics. He asked us how many additional voters would be placed on the Register by means of this alteration in the qualification. We have no accurate figures for Scotland or Ireland, but we have accurate figures for England and Wales. Taking the Register of this year, there is a discrepancy between the number of voters on the Register as occupiers and the number of occupied houses of 1,250,000. Of these, nearly 700,000 are women occupiers. The number of occupying women on the County Council Register is 685,000, and the remaining 565,000 will represent the non-registered houses. Deducting the houses which are unlet, a very considerable percentage, and the houses where the residents are of such a shifting character that it is almost impossible to attach to them any residential electoral qualification, I do not think the increase in the number of voters is much above 300,000 in the whole Kingdom. The next point is one to which the right hon. and learned Member devoted the great part of his speech. It is that of plural voting. He says that a voter possessing more than one qualification is to select from time to time the qualification in respect of which he is to vote. As he told us, this change was not made in 1884. But I may remind the House that Mr. Forster then expressed his great regret that the system of plural voting was to be maintained although supporting the Bill of the Government, because he was anxious that nothing should interfere with the progress of the measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian was himself cautious in his reference to it, and the general feeling of the House at that time was that the dual vote would have to go, and that it ought to go. Whom does this dual vote affect? Here I must express my surprise at the figures which my right hon. Friend has given us. He said the Government had no Return.

SIR H. JAMES: I quoted the Chief Secretary when he said, "I have no information to give."

MR. H. H. FOWLER: There was considerable misapprehension between my right hon. Friend and the Chief Secretary as to the exact meaning of the question. Though I have some experience of Parliamentary questions, I did not understand what my right hon. Friend was driving at, unless he was asking for the number of additional voters. He never raised the question of occupying voters.

SIR H. JAMES: Because there was nothing in the Bill of last year which touched that question.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: At any rate, these figures for which the right hon. and learned Gentleman asks have been on the Table of the House for some years, and I do not think he is justified in censuring the Chief Secretary for not having a Return at hand with which the right hon. and learned Gentleman ought himself to have been familiar. I am quite ready to admit that we made a mistake. We misunderstood the point to which he referred. This dual vote affects two classes—owners only in counties, and occupiers both in counties and in boroughs. Last year the number of county voters in England and Wales was 2,784,000, while on the existing Register the entire ownership vote is just under 500,000—497,247. We do not know how many of these are non-resident at the present time, but we do know that in 1888 the number of non-resident freeholders was 121,287. The right hon. and learned Gentleman put the case of a man having a place of business in the borough and a house outside the borough, and said that man was entitled to two votes—one in respect of each property. There has been no Return on the subject since 1888, but the figures are not very much changed, and the Return for that year shows that in the counties there were 2,061,000 occupying voters, and of these only 10,770 were non-resident; while in the boroughs there were 1,807,000 occupying voters, and of these the non-resident occupiers in the whole of the boroughs of England and Wales are stated in that Return to number 56,630. [*Cries of* "oh!"] Hon. Members express surprise. I am surprised myself, but we must accept that Return, which was prepared by the Home Office, and was signed by the late Under Secretary for the Department. I confess I was astonished at the figures, and I sent to the Home Office to know on what principle the Return was compiled. The explanation given by the Home Office is as follows:—

> "Broadly speaking, the principle on which the distinction between resident and non-resident occupation voters is founded is—'resident' are those who reside in the premises in respect of which they are qualified; 'non-resident' are those who do not reside in the premises in respect of which they are qualified. But much depends on the local knowledge of the Overseer, and if the business premises in respect of which a voter is qualified and his lodgings happen to be in the same parish, he is very frequently returned as resident; or, if the Overseer of the parish in which his qualification is situated happens to know that he is resident within the bounds of the constituency, he may also be returned as resident. If, however, his dwelling-house is situated outside the limits of the borough, he is, of course, returned as non-resident."

Well, I candidly say that that is a figure which I should have thought was below the mark. I should have thought there were a good many more persons who reside outside boroughs and vote in them. If you add something like 11,000 non-resident freeholders, I cannot make out anything more than 80,000 or 100,000, if you like, out of nearly 2,000,000 occupying voters, who possess this double qualification. But let us assume there is a larger number, and that my right hon. and learned Friend's figures are correct. What is the effect? I do not think a thing is made any the better or any the worse by taking into account the number of people affected. If the multiple vote is right and only 1,000 men possess it, they ought to be allowed to exercise it; but if it is wrong, even though 1,000,000 have it, it should be taken away. This qualification depends upon property, and upon one description of property only. A man may be a large owner or a large occupier, but why should he in respect of that one particular kind of property have an advantage which he could not have in respect of any other description of property? Let us assume a case in Manchester. A man has a place of business or manufactory in Manchester, and has his residence at Bowden or Altrincham. My right hon. and learned Friend says that he ought to have two votes. But why should not a man who has £100,000 Stock in the Manchester Ship Canal have another vote? He has quite as large a stake in the country. [An hon. MEMBER: The rates.] The rates! Are we to be told that rates are a qualification for the Imperial franchise? I always thought that that was taxation. Again and again during those long and weary evenings that we spent over the Local Government Bill, when I was attacked for giving votes to people who did not pay rates, every speaker prefaced his remarks by the statement that they did not apply to those who contributed to the Imperial taxation. But the hon. and learned Gentleman did not rest very much upon this argument. He gave us a neat, almost epigrammatic, defence of the plural vote. He said it is an anomaly to give the same voice and influence in an election to the man who had by education and habit a capacity for dealing with public affairs, and had position and responsibility, as to the man who by the accident of birth is untrained in public affairs and uneducated in the history of public life. That is a very neat definition, that is utopian, that is the counsel of perfection. I should like to see the day when nobody would have a vote who had not educational capacity to deal with public affairs; but that is not to be given by the 40s. freehold. That competitive examination and fancy educational franchise is not to be acquired by the ownership of a piece of land or a cottage, which depends on the wealth of the man who buys it. I do not hold that property and intelligence always go together. I do not hold either that the absence of property and the absence of intelligence go together. You cannot distinguish different classes of voters on the basis of the wealth or property they possess, that wealth or property being of one particular description. The citizen votes as a citizen, and not simply as a ratepayer, and I venture to say that the responsibility of citizenship for the result of administration and legislation of the individual, the burden of taxation, and the consequences of Imperial policy is not measured by wealth. The effect upon trade, on the condition of the people of this country, which arises from good or bad administration, is as much, and more, felt by the working man than by any other class in the community; and when you come to the greatest question of all, the question of peace and war, Mr. Bright has told you that there is no class whose existence is so seriously prejudiced by the commercial effect of a policy of war as the working class, or which has to pay so heavy a share of the terrible war-tax in the shape of suffering and death. Any attempt to gauge Imperial citizenship by the amount of a man's property is an attempt which always has failed in the past, and always will fail in the future. Therefore, without disputing the accuracy of the figures of my right hon. and learned Friend, be the number of dual voters great or small, I say that the possession of the dual vote simply upon a property basis is indefensible, and has not proved of service in the past. I presume that property is to be cared for by this House jointly with all other interests; but I say that the greatest security for property at this time is not the possession of the dual vote by 5,000 or 6,000 persons, but the fact that there is in the savings banks of this country £126,000,000 of the savings of the people, put in in small amounts, which gives them a stake in the prosperity of the country, quite sufficient to make them offer a stern resistance to any attempt to interfere with property. I have to apologise to the House for occupying their time so long, but I have to say one word more as to holding the elections on the same day. What is the objection to that? It was suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London that the expense is an objection. Well, the expense is always the argument used against all progress; but I believe that the opinion of the commercial classes of this country is that an Election which lasts, as the last Election did, something like 20 or 21 days is a great misfortune, and dislocates the trade of the country, and has a very bad effect on commercial interests. I am reminded that so intolerable was the loss and inconvenience occasioned by the last General Election that the Associated Chambers of Commerce passed a resolution urging the Government to remedy the evil by fixing all the elections for one day. I say, then, that I do not anticipate any great increase of cost. As to the ballot boxes, there may be a few more required, but I believe a ballot box costs no more than 7s. 6d. With reference to the staff, there would be no increase. You may have to employ 1,000 men on one day, but that is no more than 250 on four days. You will have a larger expense on one day, but that will be the beginning and the end of it. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition alluded to the popular superstition that votes are influenced by the result of the first day. I do not believe in that. Certainly at the last General Election I believe people had made up their minds which way they would vote long before the Election took place. Again, in my opinion, that is not a legitimate influence. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition also gave us the illustration of France, and pointed out that there was an idea that possibly having the elections all on one day might involve their being fixed for a Sunday. Well, Sir, I agree that that would be a very unfortunate day for the country. I am not going to advocate that, and I believe the public sense of the country would indignantly repudiate it. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to remind him that besides France there is a great Anglo-Saxon country where all the elections take place on one day, but where they respect the Sunday—I mean the United States. The year before last we had a great conflict in this country to settle the question who was to be Prime Minister, and it took us a month or more to settle it. The United States settled the same question in one day. In fact, I am informed that on that day they not only voted for the President, but for the Representative to Congress and a variety of State officers, and there were polling-booths in which four separate votes were given on that day by the constituencies. Surely what can be done in America can be done in England. The proposals of the Government in their Bill, as we think, deal with pressing and unjust anomalies. We object to postpone dealing with them until the great anomaly of the present distribution is dealt with. We are quite as anxious as hon. Gentlemen opposite for redistribution; but we do not see why a man who wants to vote, say, for the right hon. Gentleman opposite, should be deprived of that vote until Newcastle has got three Members or the number of Irish Members is rearranged. We want to get rid of some of the small borough representation, and give larger representation to the larger constituencies, and there are other anomalies in our representative system which we are quite ready to deal with, but which cannot be dealt with in this Bill. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite know that, and they know that the adoption of this Amendment is another way of moving that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. They know that, in point of fact, it is an Amendment which would destroy the Bill. In Committee we shall ask for a separate judgment on each proposal, and, unless the House is opposed to every attempt to improve our Registration Law and to deal with this unfair preponderance of electoral power and to promote the convenience of the country, it is bound to give this Bill a Second Reading.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Buteshire) said, he could not doubt that everyone who had had the pleasure—as he had had—of hearing the speech delivered by the Secretary of State for India that evening and the speech delivered by him on the subject of registration last year would be struck by the extraordinary difference between the two. Last year what was the topic upon which the right hon. Gentleman was so eloquent and clear? It was the glaring defects in the registration system of England and Wales. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out how cumbersome and costly that system was. He had pointed out how inefficient it was, and then, at the end of his speech, he had said that one or two other things had been thrown into the Bill in connection with the period of qualification and disfranchisement for non-payment of rates. Now all that was changed. The right hon. Gentleman told them a little time ago that the Bill before the House was not a Reform Bill, was not a Franchise Bill, and was not a Disfranchising Bill. He (Mr. Murray) wondered what it was. It certainly was not a Registration Bill. He would remind them that the only other Member of the Government who had addressed the House in the Debate had particularly stated that it was not a Registration Bill. The only part of it which touched registration at all was the provision which provided for the making of two Registers instead of one. Here was what the right hon. Gentleman

(Mr. H. H. Fowler) said about it when he introduced the Bill of last year—

> "We are of opinion that two revisions in the year could not be carried out, and that there would be consequently no hardship in confining the revision to once a year."

Now, consequently, if there were no changes—and the right hon. Gentleman had not said that there were any—the Bill, so far as it was a Registration Bill, was reduced to this: that it proposed to make the present system twice, or nearly twice, as costly as it was. It did not propose to grapple with the difficulties of the system, or to make it more simple or efficient. It simply proposed to add to the cost. The figures as to cost in England were given by the other right hon. Gentleman, and he (Mr. Murray) had thought at the time that it would be as well if figures relating to other parts of the United Kingdom were given. The figures the right hon. Gentleman gave were 1s. 4d. per head of the electorate in England. Well, he (Mr, Murray) took two cases at random in Scotland. He took first the case of Perth, one of the largest counties in Scotland, and he found that there the cost was 5½d.; then he took the case of Glasgow, the largest town in Scotland, and he found the figure was 11½d. What was the lesson to be learnt from these figures? It was that, so far as cost was concerned, the experience of Scotland showed that perfectly good registration could be secured very cheaply, and it had never been said that the registration system in Scotland was anything but good. The Secretary for Scotland, when he introduced it, admitted that there was little to improve in it. The plan the right hon. Gentleman had proposed had given an effective registration at a moderate cost. Surely the example of Scotland ought to incite the Government to deal effectually with the English system. If all the Government proposed to do as to registration was to increase the cost, it was clear, whatever right hon. Gentlemen might say about it, the Bill with which the House was asked to deal was not in any true sense a Registration Bill. Then, what was it? He would not use epithets, but, according to the showing of the right hon. Gentleman, it was an effort to deal with certain anomalies in the electoral system. If they were to bring in a Bill to deal with anomalies piecemeal in that way, it was absolutely necessary to show that the anomalies were of such a character that they could be easily dealt with, and that if they were dealt with they were not running the risk of incurring greater anomalies than those which already existed. Let them look in turn at the three points with which the Bill proposed to deal. First, as to the reduction of the period of qualification. The Government had not given them an argument at all bearing on the point that it was not a good thing to have a true local connection between the voter and his place of qualification, and it had not been shown that the present period of 12 months was too long, and that three months was quite enough. It was said that with a 12 months' qualification it took more than a year to get on the roll. If they wished to enable a voter to get quickly on the roll it was not necessary to interfere with the period of qualification, but the best way was to try some improved method of accelerating the making-up of the roll. If possible, they should have it made up not at one period of the year, but automatically all the year round. The right hon. Gentleman had not dealt with that which, in the view of the Opposition, was the great objection to shortening the period of qualification—namely, that when they came down to the minimum period they had to deal with a set of people who were not really connected with the locality at all. If the period of qualification were reduced to three months, a floating, itinerant electoral population would be created without any real local connection with the places where they would vote. The hon. Member for Sunderland had said that this class of person moved about from place to place in search of work. That was true, and while no one would contend that a man was better in a moral sense if he was fixed to a locality than the man who had to move about from place to place in search of work, yet the latter class of person were such as agitators would appeal to, and not in vain. The truth was, that in this part of their proposals the Government seemed to him in principle to run counter to what they proposed in another part of the Bill. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had described plural voters as persons who contaminated and obliterated the true opinions of a constituency, but at any rate where they voted they had an abiding local interest. That could not be said of the floating population who resided in a place for only three months. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the speech to which they had all listened with such interest in introducing the financial proposals of the Government had, in an eloquent passage, dealt with the insecurity of having too much floating debt. He (Mr. Murray) held that a floating electorate was just as bad a thing to have in the question of voting as a floating debt was bad finance. Could the same be said of a floating population sojourning in a place for only three months? To another provision of the Bill—he referred to the provision respecting the non-payment of rates—the Opposition objected because it would divorce taxation from representation. And here he would tell the House of what, probably, it was not aware of—namely, that the historical argument which hon. Gentlemen opposite had put forward as applicable to this matter was practically untrue, so far as Scotland was concerned. It had been represented that the condition of being on the rate-book was not a condition of the franchise, but was merely evidence of the franchise, and that, consequently, there was no real meaning in Parliament coupling the condition of the payment of rates with the vote. However that might be in England, it was not the case in Scotland. The history of the matter was this. In 1832 the franchise in burghs was a franchise which was associated with occupancy—of course, occupancy of premises of a certain value—and even that was coupled with the necessity of paying assessed taxes. In the counties, of course, at that time there was only an ownership franchise and a tenancy franchise of large amount. In 1867 the franchise in operation was conferred on the inhabitant occupier apart from the question of how much his premises were worth. It was conferred dependent on the payment of poor rates. The electoral roll of Scotland was made up from the valuation roll, and the valuation roll was a great national system of valuation which did not depend on local rate-books. This was the valuation system for the Kingdom. Now, in the Valuation Act of 1853 there had been a provision for allowing the Magistrates in burghs, if they so wished, not to enter each house separately if it was of a small value. That section was officially repealed by the Enfranchising Act of 1867, and it was made imperative on the Magistrates to enter every house separately in order that they might see whether the condition of payment of poor rates with which the franchise was coupled had been performed or not. Nothing at that time was done with the counties, because no inhabitant occupier franchise was given them in 1867. In 1884 there was one uniform franchise made both for the county and for the burgh, and the section of the Valuation Act to which he had referred was abolished *in toto*, leaving it absolutely necessary that everyone who had the franchise in a burgh should pay poor rates, and making the condition for the county precisely the same. Now, it was said, of course, that it was a hardship in the case of the compound householder that a man should lose his vote because his landlord had not paid his rate. It seemed to him (Mr. Murray) that hon. Gentlemen had got hold of quite the wrong end of the anomaly. The root of the anomaly was the existence of the compound householder, and it seemed to him that the English Courts would have done well to have followed the same direction as the decision of the Scotch Courts in this case. They had always interpreted the clause which said that a man should forfeit his electoral qualification if he had not paid his rates in the most liberal sense of saying "that is only where the duty of paying it is put upon the man himself," and in the few exceptional instances where, when the duty was not cast on the man himself, there had been no payment, they had said, "He is not to blame for that," and they had not struck him off. That same class of decision should have been followed in the case of the compound householder. It seemed to him (Mr. Murray) logically wrong to pounce upon a particular thing, and say, "Here is an anomaly; therefore, we will do something which seems to take it away," when the truth was that that anomaly was the creation of another anomaly which they had not touched. Again, they had heard the argument that, after all, the rates were local. That he entirely controverted, and he did not think there could be a more curious comment on the inextricable way in which these matters of local and Imperial duties and local and Imperial taxation were intertwined could have been found than the involuntary exclamation in the speech of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), who spoke on the first night of this Debate. Speaking on this question of disfranchisement for non-payment of rates, the hon. Member said—

> "No, Sir; I will tell you what I would be quite willing to do. I would disqualify the elector who did not send his children to school."

The hon. Member would disqualify the elector for an Imperial duty—for the non-payment of a local rate. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had never quite understood the point of view from which the Conservative Party looked on this question of plural voting and the payment of rates. They thought that for good or bad no one could look at the history of the electoral legislation of this country without seeing that the end in view was to get a reflex of the views of the whole nation. The scheme by which Parliament, in the great movement which began in 1832, sought to get it was not by the counting of noses, but by taking the country as divided into the different local divisions, and assuming that the persons who lived in those local divisions would more or less represent the different strata of interest and intellect and everything else that made up the whole composite life of the nation. It was only on that theory that they could defend the great differences between the numbers in the different constituencies, and what hon. Gentlemen opposite had never seen in the arguments of the Conservatives was this—that if they disturbed the present system they would change the basis of local representation, and that if they once did that it would be necessary to obtain a reflex of the nation by some other method. Take the Universities. They had been sneered at, and it was curious to hear the Conservative Party twitted with possessing the University representation, "which represented the education of the country." It was all the more curious when they came to think of Scotland. It might be said, perhaps, that the English Universities more or less represented the classes and plutocracy, but in Scotland every shepherd boy went to the University, and yet where was the Scotch University representation? Why, at the present moment the Party opposite could not win a single rectorial election! These were views which had not received adequate treatment from speeches made by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They never seemed to him to grapple with this—that if they once began to alter this condition of having the strata of different opinion represented by localities, then they departed from the principle on which the whole electoral system had hitherto been founded. As to the effect of the law as to non-payment of rates, there was a Return which was got at the instance of an hon. Member behind him last Session which showed that in Scotland it was very far-reaching. It touched 5 per cent. of the total electorate in counties and 25 per cent. in burghs. Yet they were told that this was not a Reform Bill, though adding one-fourth more voters to the burgh electors. What voters? Obviously those who had paid their rent and yet had not contributed those few shillings necessary to show that they had the same idea of electoral duty as they had of electoral rights. That led him on to the other question of plural voting, and he hoped the House would see that much of what he had said applied to that question also. It was quite beside the question to say either seriously or in shouts of sarcasm that there was no necessary connection between property and intelligence. There was no necessary connection almost between anything and intelligence. In the same way, that there was no need to give real property representation which they did not give to personal property. Nobody supposed that they were giving the vote because the voter had got the property. The vote was given because the property was evidence of local connection with the place and of a local stake in the affairs of the nation. That was the true meaning of the property vote. When they came to apply it to a particular instance they would no doubt find a stupid man with many votes and a clever man with none. The line must be drawn somewhere, even in the case of the most advanced views. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean was inclined to approve of universal suffrage. He (Mr. Murray) supposed the right hon. Baronet would draw the line at manhood suffrage, and yet did they not know many young men of 20 who were much more qualified to discuss political questions than others of 60 and 70? Wherever the line was drawn the same anomalies would be found, but to tell the House that the Conservatives were asking to give votes to men of property because they were proprietors was to lose the point of the situation. The Opposition maintained that the plural vote was only a fair recognition of the stake many people had in many parts of the country. A man who held property in a town and other property in other places which had been acquired by his ancestors hundreds of years before had as much right to a vote in regard to the latter property as a man would have to vote in respect of a house at the seaside in which he had been in residence for three months at a particular period of the year. The right hon. Baronet seemed to think that this had nothing to do with the Amendment. He had not seen that the moment they broke through the local connection they dislocated the whole system, and were brought face to face with some other arrangement, and that, he (Mr. Murray) took it, was the only true meaning of the Amendment which he now supported.

*Mr. BILLSON (Devon, Barnstaple) said, he hoped to answer a question raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said, "What is this Bill? It is not a Franchise Bill, and it is not a Reform Bill—what is it?" The answer was simple. It was a Bill for removing some of the anomalies which must necessarily be removed before they could have a proper system of registration. His (Mr. Billson's) view of registration was that it should be a mere matter of machinery. He did not believe they would have a proper Registration Bill until they had eliminated from the controversy four or five points on which the Parties were divided. If they could remove those matters of difference they would be able to put a Registration Bill into the hands of a Commission or a Committee, who would arrange all the details and go to the root of the whole matter, getting rid of whatever anomalies and difficulties might remain. He would put it to the House that there was no difference between the two sides as to the question of machinery. Both sides of the House wanted to have the largest number of capable electors put on the Register, and they wanted it done at as small an expense as possible. But before they could arrive at a business-like way of dealing with the Register they must remove out of the field of registration the points on which the Parties differed. The House must make up its mind what it wanted. He did not think it was of any use to bring in a Registration Bill again until they had made up their minds what they were going to do about the lodger—whether he was going to rate as an occupier without regard to the amount of rent that he paid. Then, with regard to the question of plural voting, that was not touched by the Registration Bill of last year, but it was included in the Bill now before the House, and it was more convenient to deal with it in a separate measure such as this than to mix it up with the question of registration. He would come to the question, for the moment, of the polling being held on the same day. Having had experience of a considerable number of elections, he quite agreed with what had been said to show that there would be nothing to increase the cost, nor did he believe that there would be the least difficulty in providing the machinery for taking the poll. Up to the present time the office of presiding officer had generally been filled by a solicitor, but he had found from experience that there were a number of other people who could do the work quite as well or even better—for instance, clerks in the post offices or in the banks might be quite as capable of taking the votes as solicitors, if solicitors could not be found. Another thing which was forgotten was that in every borough of the country there was practically a General Election on the 1st of November, and in Liverpool he had seen the polling take place on a Saturday, upon which day a larger number of electors polled than ever before. That was a matter of experience. In his own constituency the poll was taken on a Saturday at the last Election and also at the Election in 1886, with very satisfactory results, without any entrenchment upon the peace and quietness of Sunday, which the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) seemed so much to fear. The question of redistribution, of course, did not come into a Bill which merely removed a few electoral anomalies, nor could it be efficiently dealt with until hon. Members on both sides of the House were willing to have the constituencies divided up without regard to local sentiment. Redistribution was not a Party question. It must be recollected that in 1884 they were making a new departure; and in regard to this and that constituency constant appeals were being made on behalf of sentimental considerations. Thus it was said that places like Windsor or Canterbury, with their old historical associations and traditions, must not be disfranchised, and as it was a new departure these considerations were permitted to prevail. But 10 years had changed their feelings; they could now approach the subject unhampered by these mere sentimental ideas. He should like to have the whole question of redistribution dealt with, say, every 10 years, and settled in a non-contentious way by officials appointed for the purpose. He rather discountenanced the way in which this question of redistribution was argued from different points of view. He noticed that the Member for South Tyrone last night in a speech somewhere in London commented on what he described as the awful and shameful fact that 14,500 electors in Ireland returned five Members for small boroughs, while the great division of Romford returned only one Member. That was, of course, unequal; but he had in his mind five boroughs in England, containing not 14,500 electors, but only 12,638 electors, returning five Members. It was rather disingenuous on the part of the Member for South Tyrone to bring before his audience the great anomaly which existed in Ireland without mentioning the equal anomaly in England. They had been told that a man with property should have more votes than the man without property; but that was an argument not heard on public platforms from hon. Gentlemen opposite. The Member for West Derby brought forward the old story—that the action of the Conservative Party was really in favour of the working man. This was now the favourite rallying cry of the Party. They used it to destroy the Employers' Liability Bill—all in the interests of the working man. Nay, last week, in another place, Lord Salisbury positively advanced this as an argument for rejecting the Law of Inheritance Bill. They must, he said, protect the small freehold properties which working men might now acquire from being divided at their death amongst all their children, instead of descending to the eldest son. And so now they had the same sort of argument from the Member for West Derby. The hon. Member spoke of the "respectable settled working man" as distinct from the shifting working man; but he was certain that the man in settled work would not desire to keep the vote from his fellow because he was not a settled working man. The suggestion that there would be more personation under the new system than under the old would not hold water, for it was those who had gone away for a year and a half and who had not been heard of who were most likely to be personated. He did not regard this as a complete Redistribution Bill, but it was useful, inasmuch as it removed anomalies which stood in the way of a Redistribution Bill, and would be welcomed in the country on that account.

*SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Stafford, Handsworth) said, he had listened with great attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and had been sorry to hear the rather sneering allusion he had made in it to "genuine Liberals." He (Sir H. Meysey-Thompson) thought it was time that this sort of thing were put an end to, because, after all, it was a question very much of locality. His constituency was not very far from Wolverhampton. In Handsworth he was a genuine Liberal, and in Wolverhampton the right hon. Gentleman was a genuine Liberal. He thought that under these circumstances they had better not sneer at one another about the quality of their Liberalism. The right hon. Gentleman had accused his right hon. Friend the Member for Bury (Sir H. James) of imputing motives. His right hon. Friend had not imputed motives to the Government at all, although he had accused certain Members of the Government of imputing motives to others. If, however, the Government expected to gain no advantage from this Bill, why had they altered it from the form in which it appeared last year? The hon. Member who last spoke (Mr. Billson) said that the reason why the Bill had been changed was that the Government had not made up their minds about the lodger franchise. Surely no Member of the Opposition could say anything more unkind about the Government than this. The Members of the Government were charged with the interests of the whole Empire, and yet it was said they could not make up their minds in 12 months on such a question as that of the lodger franchise. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had accused the Opposition of always asking for redistribution when a Franchise Bill was brought forward. If that was such a grievance, why on earth did the Government not go in for equal electoral districts and "One Man One Vote" and have done with the matter. That would be a very simple way of solving the question. The right hon. Gentleman denied that the Bill would greatly increase the cost of elections. Well, he (Sir H. Meysey-Thompson) had a letter the other day from his own election agent—a man of great experience in these matters—and his opinion was that the measure would very largely increase the expense in his constituency. He would rather take the opinion of a practical man like an election agent on such a point than the opinion of any Member of the Government. He had received very urgent representations from his constituents—and he confessed he did not wonder at it—that he should do his utmost to oppose the Bill. His constituency was a very large one, and was rapidly increasing. He was told that after the revision in the summer there would be something like 18,000 electors in the division, and he did not suppose that anybody would contend that the electors of South Staffordshire were not as intelligent a body of men as any in the Kingdom. It was said that great intelligence was always allied with great modesty, and he believed that his constituents were as well endowed with modesty as those of any other constituency. It had been well remarked that vices were only virtues in excess, and he thought his constituents would be carrying the virtue of modesty to excess if they allowed that one elector in Ireland ought to have as much political power as 10 electors in the English Midlands. But that would be the effect of the Bill if carried out without doing anything to redress the inequality of the representation. There were constituencies in Ireland with less than 1,800 electors, and if they were to send Members to Parliament exercising equal voting power with English Members representing constituencies of 18,000, it would be equal to saying that 10 men in Ireland were as good as 100 men in the Midlands. Perhaps the most serious attempt to justify the Bill had been made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. They were always pleased to hear the right hon. Baronet, because his ideas were very clear, and he had the fortunate gift of being able to express them clearly. But there were exceptions to every rule, and he was bound to say that in his speech the other day the logical sequence of the right hon. Baronet's ideas was not quite so perfect as usual. To begin with, the right hon. Baronet told them that the owners of property ought to be disfranchised as owners of property in respect of their property when they possessed also votes as occupiers, because property did not always represent intelligence. On the other hand, the right hon. Baronet told them that the Universities, which were, he supposed, the most intelligent constituencies in the known world, ought to be disfranchised also. The property owners were to be disfranchised because they were not intelligent, and the Universities because they were too intelligent. The right hon. Baronet also went on to tell them of another anomaly. Irish electors might have plenty of intelligence, but in knowledge of political affairs they were certainly behind the electors of Great Britain. [*Cries of* "No!"] He assured the House it was so. ["No, no!"] Whatever knowledge of political affairs the Irish electors might possess, what with the priests and the leagues, care was taken that they should not exercise it.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, the propositions which the hon. Member had connected were not connected in his remarks. What he said in regard to property was in reply to the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. What he said in regard to the Universities had reference to a complete scheme, and any such scheme would, of course, reduce the Irish representation.

*SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON said, of course, he accepted the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, but he might at all events conclude that the right hon. Gentleman was opposed to the dual vote, that he was, as far as this Bill was concerned, in favour of continuing the over-representation of Ireland, and that he was in favour of disfranchising the Universities. In the Midlands a very strong feeling existed about the over-representation of Ireland, because it was felt to be grossly unfair to this country, and especially to the large industrial centres in England, which in many cases were comparatively under-represented to an unjust extent. The general opinion was that 80 Members for Ireland were too many; that, the various circumstances of taxation, education, commercial importance, and population taken into account, 60 Members would be a fair representation for Ireland in the House of Commons. Moreover, the population of the United Kingdom was increasing at a rapid rate, something like 440,000 a year, whilst, on the other hand, the population of Ireland was practically stationary. Therefore, when the Bill came into operation in 1896, if it was passed, the inequality in representation would be much greater than now, and surely that was another and strong reason why this anomaly should have been dealt with in this Bill. The class of voters whom they were going to disfranchise were the flower and pick of the constituencies. They were men who had invested their savings, not in foreign loans, but in solid property in England, and it would be a great political mistake to curtail or destroy the influence of this class in the State. There was another class whom they proposed to do a great injustice to, and that was the lodgers. There were many men living in large towns who had sons residing in their houses, and these sons would be treated with great injustice. The coachman and the gardener and others had a vote, but these young men to whom he alluded, however intelligent they might be—and many of them would have had a University education—would practically be disfranchised. He knew it might be said that means might be adopted to give them a vote. They might have a room to themselves at home, and pay a certain sum annually, and they would get the vote, but great difficulties were placed in their way. They would be compelled to go into Court and answer very inquisitorial questions, which was a very unfair thing, because other classes of electors were not subjected to such questions. They had also to consider how the lodger exercised the vote. A householder might change from one house to another in a constituency and did not lose the vote, but lodgers were differently situated, and nobody could contend that that arrangement ought to be perpetuated. While, however, they were disfranchising one class they were going to add very much to the representation of another, who were already exceedingly well represented. They were going to enfranchise a certain number of men who would be very much better without the vote—a class who, after living in a house for a certain time, paid no rates, got into debt, removed silently, and went through the same proceedings elsewhere. He did not think that the proposal to make them voters would benefit the country much, while it would add immensely to the expense of registration, on account of the difficulty of tracing them. With regard to the extraordinary arrangements made respecting plural voting, there was no man in the House who would be more affected than he was himself, because he had voters in many different places. He had the whole freehold vote in several towns, including West Bromwich, Walsall, and Wednesbury, which had each a borough Member, and it was almost certain that at a General Election almost all these voters would vote in their own borough. If, however, he (Sir H. Meysey-Thompson) were to die, and there were a bye-election, all these freehold voters would probably vote in the county; therefore, the extra expense of keeping these voters on the Register, and looking them up every six months, would be forced upon him, while, probably, in his lifetime, he would never get the slightest advantage from them. There would be the additional disadvantage of all the intrigue and underhand manœuvring which would be set on foot to decide in which constituency those with the double qualification should vote. Both at general and bye-elections offers would be made to candidates to induce men to vote in the county instead of the borough, or *vice versâ*, and payment in some shape or other would be expected for such services. He strongly suspected that the

Bill had emanated from a caucus of Liberal agents, and he was afraid they had tried to do what the lawyers had already done for the law—to make it a thing nobody could understand unless they were well paid to understand it; and yet this was supposed to be an improvement on our present system. He confessed that he could not see that. The conclusion that he and his constituents had come to was that this was a bad Bill, and he believed it would do the Government more harm than any Bill they had yet introduced. After all, the English people liked fair play; they liked to fight fairly, and there was a great suspicion about this Bill of hitting below the belt. They did not like to see one Party loading the dice or packing the cards against their opponents. Then he could not help thinking that they were losing sight of what the main object of any alteration of their registration system ought to be. The object ought to be to secure a better electorate and a better House of Commons, whereas he held that they were going to disfranchise one of the most capable class of electors, that they were going to do nothing for the sons, lodgers, and assistants in large establishments residing on the premises, and they were going to enfranchise a class which contained some undesirable elements. He might be told that these were Tory opinions, but he believed them to be the opinions of common sense, and that they were shared in by the majority of his constituents.

MR. WHITELEY (Stockport) said, he felt called upon to offer a few observations on this very important Bill before it went to a Second Reading. He believed that most hon. Members had expressed themselves in the country as strongly in favour of a very drastic and thorough reform of the Registration Laws. He himself had done so, but his idea had always been that that reform should tend rather to the simplification of registration, and more especially to the cheapening of the cost, not only to the community at large but also to the candidate. He ventured to argue, however, that not only would that result not be attained in this Bill, but that a diametrically opposite result would follow. If the Bill were to come into law, it would add very largely to the difficulty of working registration affairs, and would increase the expense to the ratepayers and the candidates. While it would involve increased cost, it would also increase the facilities which the wealthy man would have of juggling with the smaller constituencies. His objection to the Bill was that it was not thorough enough, and that it did not deal with the question broadly. He himself believed—although he might be formulating a doctrine which would be contrary to the opinion of most hon. Members of the House—that no revision of the Registration Laws would be satisfactory unless it dealt with some great evils of the public Revision Courts of the country. Those who were generally present in such Courts knew that the proceedings there were sometimes more of a mockery and a delusion than the carrying out of the law for which they were constituted. False swearing went on to a marvellous degree, and lying and trickery also prevailed. Registration was a public work, which ought to be carried out and performed by the community at large, by the County Councils, and by the Town Councils, and the more one could diminish the interference and the meddling of political parties and agents in registration matters, the better it would be for the community. For himself, he favoured a six months' qualification. Before a vote was granted many hon. Members had pointed out that it might mean that a man would be off the Register for over a year before he obtained a vote to which he had a right. He believed that in 95 per cent. of the cases that would not be so. His plan would be that public registration agents should be appointed, and that when the lists of Overseers were published a month should be given to the political agents of both Parties to state their objections in writing, or the claims they desired to make, and, after that month had elapsed, the registration agent should deal with the case *in camerâ*, summon the people to whom objection had been taken to meet him at the Registration Court, swear them, and make them sign a declaration as to the length of time that they had been in occupation, and as to whether they were the real tenants. By that a good deal of the difficulty and friction of a public revision would be obviated. He believed that that would be a cheap way of getting over the present difficulty. He himself did not lay much stress upon the question of the payment of the poor rates. He believed it was desirable to retain the present plan, but he did not argue very strongly for it, for he did not believe that a man would pay his poor rates any the sooner, if he had not got the money, from the fear of losing his vote. As to taking the polls on one day, he himself knew the disadvantage of elections being carried over a long period of time. He did not see great objection against the Saturday poll, but it seemed to him that the difficulty might be met by having a poll upon some other day than a Saturday, and by the framing of a regulation that a half-holiday should be granted on the day of polling. To say, however, that the whole of the polls of the United Kingdom, both borough and county, should be held on one day was to create a great difficulty. The question could, he thought, be solved by having the polls for the boroughs on one day—Saturday or any other day—and those for the counties six or seven days afterwards. He regarded the Bill as undoubtedly a great disfranchising measure. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India had said that he would not answer many of the conundrums put to him by the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir H. James), but he might be excused for suggesting that the answer would not be forthcoming, because there was no possible answer. This seemed to be not a Registration Bill but a Bill drafted as an attempt to dish the Unionist Party. Hard words had been used in the discussion on the Bill, but he did not believe any of them had been too hard. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in introducing the Bill, made a speech the most guileless and artless, his demeanour was childlike and bland, as if this were only simply a Registration Bill, and not one by which the Government were carrying out practically a revolution in the franchise of the country. It seemed to him it was a cardinal principle of the Gladstonian Liberal Party that they, and they alone, were fit and proper occupants of the Treasury Bench, and if the constituencies did not agree with that view, so much the worse for the constituencies, and they had got to be changed. He believed that if the Gladstonian Party had not in their inmost hearts thought this Bill, if carried into law, would be of service to them, very little would have been heard of "One Man One Vote." Speaking to a leading Gladstonian Liberal in a Lancashire constituency and venturing to prophesy that the seat would be carried by a Unionist at the next election, he was met by this retort—"Whether that be so or not, only give us 'One Man One Vote,' and you have seen the last of Unionist representation in this Division of Lancashire." The Unionists held the opinion that a fair distribution or redistribution of seats would be of great advantage to them. They believed that if the superabundant representation enjoyed by Ireland and Wales was shorn off and the Members allotted to that portion of England at the present time unrepresented, that would act to the advantage of the Unionist Party. Therefore, he ventured to say it was the bounden duty of the Unionist Party with forethought and foresight to recognise this possible state of affairs, and take care that in any Registration Bill similar to this they were not over-reached and, to use the word of the right hon. Member for Bury, not jockeyed out of the present position they rightly occupied.

*MR. WALTON (Leeds, S.) said, it was obvious to those who had heard the speeches by which the Amendment was supported that the language of the Amendment was a mere feint for a most violent attack on the principle and scope of the measure. The Amendment conceded that there were anomalies in their existing representative system, and proposed to postpone the correction of anomalies the burden of which they felt to some vague and indefinite period. The answer to such a contention, he should submit to the House, was very shortly this: Why should they defer the remedy of evils for the correction of which the country was prepared till they were ready to produce the remedy for other evils for the correction of which the country was not prepared? Did hon. Members opposite seriously contend that the people of this country were prepared for a new electoral map with mechanical districts, mathematically arranged, in defiance of all notions of local centres of population? He gathered from the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth that they were not prepared for any such thing. Were they prepared for any system of redistribution of electoral power? Hon. Members opposite had not sought to prepare the country for any such change, and if one was to judge from the history of the attitude of the Conservative Party towards these proposals in the past they were not disposed to advance schemes for the redistribution of political power which could scarcely be attended by any accession of strength to the Conservative Party in the country. The effort of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury in his speech that night was to show that some redistribution of electoral power was a condition for the passing of this measure. He asked the House to come to the conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman entirely failed to prove that proposition, and for this reason—that they were not dealing with a measure which conferred any new franchise; they were dealing with a measure which sought only to free the existing franchise from the fetters which impeded its exercise by the people who possessed it. The abuses against which the Bill was directed were obvious abuses, and they were twofold in character. In the first place, they had an abuse of a registration system which, by means of an elaborate machinery of officialism, strangled the existing franchise with red tape, and they had an abuse of plural voting under which the exercise of the franchise by a large section of the people of this country was neutralised by the casting of votes by persons who possessed the happy privilege of plurality of voting powers. These two evils were patent, they were pressing, and they were evils which the Government were justified in attempting to remedy without being launched into any vague scheme of redistribution of electoral power, not only in England, but in Ireland, for which the opinion of the country, he submitted, was at present entirely unprepared. How could it be shown that, as a condition for the remedy of these two evils, they must re-organise their elective system of representative government? These defects, he submitted, would be defects in any system of distribution of electoral power. The redistribution of electoral power could not be a condition, therefore, for the removal of defects which would be defects in any electoral system. He listened that night with some degree of regret to the speech which fell from the right hon. Member for Bury. They had looked upon his right hon. and learned Friend as one of the greatest supporters of the cause of electoral purity, and to hear that night the recantation of some of the opinions which led them to regard his right hon. Friend as one of the champions of the cause which this Bill sought to advance caused a feeling of pain to some of those who listened to that speech. What was the ground of the attack which his right hon. and learned Friend made? He said this was a disfranchising Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth gave expression to the same view, and it was the disfranchising character of this measure which led to some of the strongest comments which fell from the right hon. Member for Bury. With great respect he challenged the accuracy of that description. He submitted it could not be fairly said that this Bill was disfranchising in its character. Its operation in the registration section of the Bill was distinctly enfranchising in its character. If they got a measure diminishing the restrictions on the franchise and enlarging the scope of its exercise, he submitted to that extent and to that degree its character was not disfranchising, but enfranchising. His right hon. Friend said that by disfranchising the plural voter they carried a measure of disfranchising reform. It was true it disfranchised, but it enfranchised in a corresponding degree, because every plural vote struck from the list of pluralists set free the vote of a single voter who up to that moment was neutralised by the exercise of the plural vote. They had some of them heard of the clergyman who, by the exercise of a little interest and by the expenditure of a little money, managed to amass in his own hands no less than 35 voting qualifications, and the ample leisure of his clerical office allowed him in the course of a General Election to visit some 30 constituencies and record his vote in each. A measure which struck 34 votes from that list of 35 enfranchised 34 people who up to that moment had their electoral power destroyed by the plural franchise. A Bill which destroyed the plural voter enfranchised the single voter in a degree exactly proportionate to the disfranchising effect of its operation on the plural voter. He admitted that the plural vote had the merit of antiquity in its origin. This measure proposed to attack a modern abuse of an ancient right. In its present character the exercise of the plural vote was only possible under conditions affording facilities for locomotion which in the days of its origin were non-existent. The nomadic elector, or, to use the expression of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, the wandering elector, was an impossible factor in days before the existence of express trains, and, therefore, it was more in its modern aspect than in its ancient character that this Bill sought to remove or reduce the evil. They had an illustration given with considerable force by both the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth and the right hon. and learned Member for Bury. They gave them, perhaps, the strongest example of the injurious operation of the pluralities portion of the Bill. They gave the case of the tradesman who traded in the town and resided in the country, the manufacturer who manufactured in the borough and resided in the country, and they asked were the Government going to commit the enormity of depriving these men of their ancient franchise to be separately exercised in regard to their place of residence and their place of business? He unhesitatingly answered that contention by disputing the accuracy of the statement that any such franchise was ancient in its origin. In the time of antiquity to which their sympathetic attention was drawn, the tradesman lived over his shop, and the manufacturer resided at his mill, and enjoyed under these conditions only one vote, and only the influence of a unit upon the politics of the country; and was it reasonable to say that, because the tradesman chose to reside in the country or the manufacturer chose to leave his residence at the mill, his political influence on the Imperial issues submitted to the judgment of the country, for these very inadequate reasons, was to be multiplied by two? That was the very pressing aspect of this question which made the case of reform an urgent one. Under the existing system they had no check upon the capricious or unscrupulous acquisition of electoral power. When they destroyed the pluralist they would kill the faggot voter. Let them take another illustration of the evils of the present system. They knew the history of the special train which often visited a rural constituency in the course of an election. They knew of the band of gentlemen who, with some difficulty, found their way from the railway station to the polling station, inquiring the direction of their road on the way. They knew that the moment their votes were recorded they returned to the distant urban constituency from which they had come. They knew nothing of the district in which they had recorded their vote, except the road which intervened between the polling and the railway station; they never visited the constituency, the election of which they were influencing, except in the course of a General Election, and yet their contribution to the decision of that contest had an appreciable, and in some cases could be shown to have had a controlling, effect upon the choice of the permanent residents in the locality of the political system under which they might choose to reside. These were illustrations of evils which the House should take into its serious consideration, and if the Bill proposed to remove them he submitted that it was an instalment of reform which ought to be welcomed. The fact that they had evils of this kind called for some intervention of the House. They had had a repetition to-night, from his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury, of the defence of plural voting. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the franchise had local associations, which demanded that every elector should exercise his electoral right in every district with which he might be connected. Lord Salisbury, speaking on a recent occasion, gave utterance to the same idea, and he said that local divisions were based on local knowledge of the wants and objects of the locality. That was a most powerful argument in favour of local voting for local government, but the issues which were submitted to the country were not local, but Imperial; the issues affected not the wants of the locality, but the interests of the Empire as a whole, and although the elections might take place in various districts, the issue presented to all was precisely the same, and the considerations affecting the decision of the whole could not fairly be called local considerations. There was a time, no doubt, when local considerations largely affected the character of the franchise; but the formation of definite political Parties, the submission to the decision of the country of definite political issues, the diffusion of knowledge as to the character of those issues, had entirely destroyed the local character of the franchise. Let them test by practical inquiry the accuracy of the argument which fell from his right hon. and learned Friend. Suppose they had a Birmingham manufacturer residing in the constituency of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, and with a moor in Scotland. Suppose that, in the case of a General Election, he exercised his threefold franchise under the separate local influences of these distinct local interests, what would be the result? They would have a contemporaneous support of the three Parties into which this House was divided, and such an illustration, he submitted, entirely destroyed the notion that under existing political conditions the franchise possessed a local character, which must derive local colour from the area in which it might be exercised. What was the aim of statesmanship in dealing with electoral questions under existing conditions? Its object was, if possible, to strip the franchise of all ideas of place or persons, to make the issues clearly Imperial in their character, and if they had local divisions to create these local divisions not with reference to separate local interests or prejudices, but to group them on some fair system which would give to each area some fair proportion between the population seeking representation and the representative who might be chosen by that population to sit in this House. Local ideas and local knowledge, he submitted, could only disturb and distract those Imperial issues upon which public opinion was invited, and upon the decision of which the fate of the Government and the policy of the Empire must depend. What was the only real argument which they had heard in support of the opposition to this Bill? They had had one argument, and it had met a strange fate. It had been repudiated by some speakers and adopted by others. It had been the shuttlecock of the oratory addressed to the House from the Opposition Bench, and the argument was that the plural vote was the vote of property against democracy. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth said it was a bulwark of property against democracy.

Sir E. CLARKE (Plymouth): I never said myself, nor have I heard any one on this side of the House say, that plural voting is the bulwark of property.

*Mr. WALTON accepted at once the repudiation, which he quite anticipated, of the language which he attributed to him, but he was sure his hon. and learned Friend would not repudiate the argument. The contention of his hon. and learned Friend was that plural voting was in the hands of the propertied class; that the propertied class and the intelligent and educated class were identical, and that the vote of property was defensible, not only because it was the vote of property, but of intelligence and education. When this Bill was first before the House the Leader of the Opposition repudiated with indignation the suggestion that he had any sympathy with a system which would give electoral power to the possessors of property alone. But it was beyond all question that plural voting did give political power to the possessors of property; it gave them direct political power, and the contention by gentlemen opposite was that, as they ordinarily found property and intelligence going together, they were justified in giving this increased political power to property, because they sometimes found the owners of property were the possessors of intelligence. But the possessors of property, had too much indirect power at present to lead them (the Liberals) to sympathise with any measure which would seek to increase that indirect political influence by any accession to or by any maintenance of their existing direct political power. But was this a satisfactory concession to the propertied classes? He thought that a more unsatisfactory bulwark of property could scarcely be devised than the present system, which gave political power to real property and ignored the whole funded wealth of the community and those large accumulations of capital by means of which the greatest achievements of property had been accomplished. In addition, they had a concession of political power to property which was not in proportion either to the extent or to the value of the property which received that concession of power. Take the case of an owner of an estate worth £20,000 a year, who had one voting qualification; but if they distributed his estate over 30 counties he might have 30 voting qualifications. So, also, they found the principle of corporate ownership entirely discarded. A man might have £500,000 of Railway Stock; the railway might go into several counties in England; he might have a large control over extensive works in many constituencies in which that railway moves, and what was the political power that was given to the possessor of all that property? It was absolutely *nil;* and yet the owner of a mere fraction of that wealth, differently invested over a smaller area, might hold in his hands voting qualifications which would defeat or neutralise the opinions of a whole township. On the Government side of the House they were quite ready to entertain a system dealing with the redistribution of electoral power in this country, but for present purposes the Government had sufficiently loaded the ship, and he therefore asked the House not to judge harshly of this measure because it did not entirely satisfy all the requirements of the largest scheme for electoral reform. There was one other topic on which he would like to say a word. He was sorry to hear the recantation of the right hon. and learned Member for Bury with reference to the disqualification of voters owing to the non-payment of rates. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had at one time laid down the principle that to disqualify a voter for the non-payment of local rates was to disqualify him in the discharge of an Imperial franchise while at the same time he was paying Imperial taxation. How was the opinion of an elector on the affairs of Egypt or Uganda, or on the merits of the Budget, less valuable because he had not paid his last contribution towards the repair of the highways, or, perhaps, some very small local rate? It was difficult to see any relation between the fitness of the penalty they sought to visit on the offence. In the case of misfortune it was an unjust retribution upon a man, who might be a worthy citizen, to deprive him of all political power because he was in arrear with his rates. He felt that the House would recognise that it was their policy to enforce as far as possible on the people of the country a recognition of their obligation to record their votes; and to enforce as far as possible the opinion that it was not only a privilege, but a duty, to discharge the franchise; and if that were true, as most undoubtedly it was, what they did under the present system was to punish a man for a breach of obligation—the obligation to pay rates—by forcing on him the breach of another obligation—the obligation to record his vote. The Bill had been denounced to-night in unmeasured language as a corrupt Bill. When it came before the House first it was received with much more toleration. It was said that it was a gerrymandering measure. He repudiated the suggestion that the Liberal Party wished by this Bill to gerrymander the constituencies. That charge had been made against every electoral reform which had been brought before the House, and it would prove as false now as it had proved false in the past. The supporters of the Government were conscious of the anomalies to which he had referred, and they would not be deterred from seeking their removal by reflections on their motives, or by opprobrious epithets applied to their measures. They would not be satisfied until evils were remedied which they regarded as affecting the free exercise of a popular franchise and impairing the representative character of Parliament.

*MR. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport) said, he desired to compliment the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down upon the ability of what he understood was the hon. Gentleman's first contribution to the Debates of the House. He confessed that there was scarcely a proposition in the hon. Gentleman's interesting speech with which he was not in disagreement; but if he failed to follow the hon. Gentleman point by point through his remarks, he hoped the hon. Gentleman would understand that it was not because of inability to appreciate their force, but because he desired to confine himself to incidents which occurred earlier in the evening. The House had looked forward with much interest to the speech of the Secretary for India, because of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman was the author of the most dissimilar Bill which was introduced last year. If the present measure survived the attack of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, and the right hon. and learned Member for Bury, he doubted whether it would survive the defence of the Secretary for India. That speech was remarkable for what it contained, but it was still more remarkable for what it did not contain. The right hon. Gentleman had offered no explanation of the fact that the same Government in successive Sessions had introduced two Bills, professedly dealing with the same subject, of the most opposite and contradictory character. He had not told the House why plural voting, which he last year stated had nothing to do with registration, had been introduced into a Bill which he now said was not a Franchise Bill, and was therefore a Registration Bill. He had not told the House why the proposal to have all elections on the same day figured in this Bill, and was absent from the Bill of last year. On the other hand, he had not explained why no attempt had this year been made to deal with the lodger franchise, successive occupation, the principle that the burden of registration should be borne by the State, and other points of admitted utility contained in the Bill of last Session. Nor had any defence been offered of the fortuitous selection of particular anomalies and the total neglect of others. Why was there no provision for the relief of candidates for Parliament from returning officers' expenses? But perhaps more remarkable than all these was the fact that no serious attempt had been made by the Government to explain how it was that this Bill, which, if he might differ from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India, was a Franchise Bill and not a Registration Bill, and which indeed the right hon. Gentleman admitted in a part of his speech was a Franchise Bill—since he had said that they were fighting exactly the same battle as in 1884—had been introduced despite the settlement of 1885. This was a Franchise Bill, and was a deliberate re-opening of the settlement of 1885, which the Secretary for Scotland said at the time "settled everything except the question of sex on a permanent and solid basis, so that no man would be troubled with the question of the franchise again;" and therefore he wished to know why in this proposal the Government had entirely ignored the gross anomaly of the over-representation of certain parts of the country? These circumstances had heightened and deepened the suspicion with which the Bill had come to be regarded, and the Government had probably realised the fact that the discussion at every future stage would be prolonged, if not acrimonious, and that the measure would be treated by the Opposition with the importance which it deserved. The further they proceeded with this Bill the less, in his opinion, did the House like it. From the hon. Member for Sunderland and the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean trenchant criticisms of the Bill had been heard, and other speeches from the Ministerial side of the House contained indications that some of the most important provisions of the measure were doomed. Take the question of having the polls on the same day. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India appeared to be quite unaware of the fact that any argument had been advanced againist that proposal. Why a perfect sheaf or forest of reasons had been advanced against the proposal to have the polls on the same day. It had been pointed out that if the day was a Saturday the Jewish portion of the community would practically be disfranchised, and that the change would largely prevent small shopowners from exercising the franchise. Then there was the police difficulty to confront. Disturbance might be fomented and organised deliberately in one district in order to draw the police away from other localities where it was desired to exercise political intimidation. The question of expense, again, was one that should not be underrated. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not anticipate that the cost of the polls on the one day would be great. The right hon. Gentleman's opinion was not shared by those cognisant of the subject, and certainly not by those election agents whom he had consulted. But even if the right hon. Gentleman was right with regard to expense, surely he had altogether underrated the difficulties that would arise in providing the requisite machinery. He had taken pains to ascertain the fashion in which this proposal would apply in Derbyshire, the county in which he lived. It was said in the course of the Debate by one hon. Gentleman that there would be no necessity whatever to increase the existing staff. The hon. Member must have spoken in ignorance of what was required. In Derbyshire there were at the General Election 220 presiding officers and a similar number of clerks, and even under the present system, when the elections took place at different times in different parts of the county, there was a difficulty in getting well-qualified persons to fill the posts. But if all the elections took place on the one day, there would be the risk that the returning officer would have to fall back on persons to act as presiding officers who would not be efficient for carrying out the work. The scale of pay that was provided for presiding officers was not sufficient to attract men of business and of good position; and not only did they run the risk of getting persons not qualified to do the work, but they would place the returning officer in a most unfair position. The returning officer was responsible for the proper conduct of the election; and if owing to the failure of duty of any of his subordinates the election should be declared void, the penalty fell on him. Therefore, the question of having the polls on the same day was not so small, nor a matter of such common agreement, as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury had spoken of the intolerable expense the double Register would impose on both ratepayers and candidates. He would point out that in Derbyshire last year the cost of the Register was as follows:—Printing, £900; Revising Barristers' fees, £200; the allowance for Overseers was difficult to fix with positive accuracy, but he had put it down at £3,500, which amounted altogether to £4,600. With a double Register the cost would probably be nearly doubled, so that the constituencies of Derbyshire would have to pay £10,000 annually, excluding, altogether, the much larger sum that was most unjustly and unnecessarily under the present system imposed on the candidates themselves. He did not desire to use strong language. He would not say that on this side of the House they regarded this Bill as a shameless attempt to gerrymander the constituencies in the interests of the Party opposite, but he did say that it was a deliberate attempt to combine the maximum of Party advantage with the minimum of public gain. His right hon. Friend the Member for Bury had deliberately challenged the Government on that point. He had accused the Government in the plainest language of having introduced the Bill for Party purposes, and he had challenged the next speaker who rose on the Government side of the House to point out what were the provisions in the Bill which did not tend to that result. The late Attorney General, in a speech he recently delivered, had confessed that the Bill had been introduced chiefly with that object. None of the hon. Members on the Government Bench seemed inclined, however, to accept this oft-repeated challenge, and had carefully avoided making any direct reference to it in their speeches.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: The hon. Member has not stated the case quite accurately.

Mr. CURZON said, that at any rate the fact was significant. It was very interesting to observe these signs of commencing friction of opinion on the Government Bench, and he could only suppose that, having lost their Attorney General, hon. Members on that side of the House now felt themselves free to repudiate any sentiments he had expressed which did not fit in with the present occasion. If the Government had been in earnest nothing would have been easier for them than to have brought in a straightforward Registration Bill, and if they had desired to see such a Bill placed on the Statute Book they could have brought in a measure which would have met with practical acceptance on both sides and could have been passed through the House that Session. There was no doubt a general consensus of opinion existed that registration reform was needed. The present Bill simply bristled with contentious matter, and he could only suppose that the Government when introducing it were looking ahead, and hoped that it would prove a good thing for them in the event of a General Election and would furnish a cry against the House of Lords. Indeed, one hon. Member had "let the cat out of the bag" last night when he said that if the Bill passed it would be a good Bill, and if it were rejected the Government would have a good argument. That was, in his opinion, a very good demonstration of his assertion that the Government did not wish the Bill to pass into law so much as they desired to see it thrown out by the House of Lords. The supporters of the Bill also contended that the Bill was not a disfranchising, but an equalizing measure. How far was this line of argument to be carried? Suppose Parliament took away a man's property. Was it any consolation to him to be told that his goods were confiscated in order to reduce him to the condition of hundreds of thousands of his fellow-countrymen? Confiscation did not become either more palatable or more just because others were already in the condition of the victim. He next desired to say a few words about the plural vote. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) had expressed his opinion that the defence of the plural vote was nothing less than "rank Toryism." Whatever the right hon. Member meant by that expression, he at any rate had no hesitation in supporting it. Hon. Members on this side of the House did not defend the system on the ground that the right was in any way inherent to either property, education, or wealth. Property rested on a more solid basis in this country than on plural votes. Wealth needed no special safeguards for its adequate representation; whilst it was too late to talk about an educational franchise when the illiterate voter had been admitted to the electoral roll. The real ground that the system was defended upon was that of "local interest." In other words, a man who had to pay rates and taxes for property had a civic interest in the district where that property was situated, and was entitled to a vote in respect of it. Suppose, for example, he possessed an estate in the country and business premises in London, and, let him say, a mine in Cornwall. Surely he was interested, not merely from a business point of view, in these properties, but also in the return of the Representatives, which the different counties where they were situated sent up to that House. Again, surely it was not fair to treat the ownership voters as if they were in the same category as non-resident ownership voters. Many of them were not rich men, but were poor shopkeepers. How many of the Members of that House knew cases where tradesmen conducted their business in their shops with no living premises attached? Could they be termed non-resident? They lived eight or nine hours in one place, and they spent the next eight or nine hours in another. Why should it be held that the only place for which they should have a vote was the place where they slept? Why should they not have a vote for the place where they "lived, moved, and had their being?" Why should that be treated as not being a legitimate qualification at all? The Government were, however, not abolishing the plural vote. They had not the time or the courage to do that. They were attempting to cripple it by prohibiting its exercise, but a man might still own as many votes as before. The gentleman who was stated by an hon. Member to have 35 votes would go on just the same. He would be at liberty to use them at bye-elections, but not at a General Election, and hon. Members of that House would have constituents who were their constituents at one period and not at another. He should like to make one observation on the reduction of the qualifying period. They had been asked this question—"What do you mean on your side by saying that the reduction of the qualifying period will mean the introduction of an alien element into the constituencies?" What they meant was this: What was to prevent, if this Bill passed into law, a Corporation of any great town which had strong political prepossessions, as Corporations notoriously had, from starting a great scheme of public works for the benefit of the town and importing 500 or 600 voters? Probably in the case of Lancashire, from which he was a Representative, they would be Irishmen, and they would vote against him; so that he might be turned out by an alien and imported vote. He would take another case which might well arise in a constituency where there was a very slight difference in the voting strength between the two Parties. What was to prevent any large employer of labour from engaging for his factory or workshop a sufficient body of workmen, which, of course, would be under his control, to turn the poll? This was almost certain to arise where Parties were pretty evenly divided and where the political balance could be overturned easily by manipulation of that sort. Next, he wished briefly to refer to over-representation. He had listened to the defence of the Government for not dealing with the great abuses of over-representation in parts of the United Kingdom. What did that defence amount to? They admitted the over-representation of Ireland and Wales. It was a singular remark to make that public opinion was not now ripe for legislation on these points when it was considered ripe last year, and the necessity for dealing with them was recognised in the Home Rule Bill of the Government. The President of the Local Government Board had admitted that over-representation existed in Ireland and Wales, but he said that this gain to the Nationalist vote was balanced by a gain to the Unionist vote in 16 or 17 counties in England. Was it to be seriously argued that an anomaly became less of an anomaly when it was repeated? It was said that redistribution would involve the loss of the University seats. That question would be discussed at the proper time; but it ought not to be used as a threat or a bribe to obtain acquiescence in the continuance of an injustice. The Chief Secretary said that redistribution would mean the readjustment of seats at regular periods according to changes of population. And why not? What if we had such a revision from time to time, after each Census or after every other Census? That would be a much less evil than the present over-representation of several parts of the United Kingdom, or than manipulation of the franchise at irregular periods. The Secretary for India said this argument was one of the time-honoured weapons of the Tory Party, and its first line of defence against democracy. At any rate, it was a weapon which had so far been successfully used.

*Mr. Curzon*

In 1884 the House of Lords suspended a Franchise Bill unaccompanied by a Redistribution Bill, and passed a Resolution declaring that it was desirable that Parliament should meet in the autumn to consider the Representation of the People Bill in conjunction with a Redistribution Bill, which Her Majesty's Government had undertaken to present to Parliament on the earliest possible occasion. What was the result? It brought the Government to their knees; the interval was spent in compromise between the two Parties; private conferences took place between the Leaders on both sides, and a scheme of redistribution was agreed upon. He remembered that at a contested election he was able to quote *The Daily News* as saying that the country owed the Bill as much to the Tories as to the Radicals, to Lord Salisbury as to Mr. Gladstone. How could this attitude be a line of defence against democracy when in the last result it must lead to equal electoral districts—the *fine fleur* of advanced democracy? None of those excuses, he ventured to say, was the real reason why the Government had not dealt with redistribution in the Bill. That reason was known to, though not confessed by, every Member on the opposite side of that House, and it would be known hereafter to every voter throughout the country. The real motive for the Bill was not the redress of a grievance; it was a continuance in Office Bill. It was stated on the back that it was for reducing the period of qualification, &c.; but the real object was implied in the most subtle and sinister manner in the conclusion of the title. It was—

> "A Bill to reduce the period of qualification for Parliamentary and local government electors; to provide for the half-yearly registration of such electors; to provide that they shall vote on one day;"

and the last words were "and for purposes consequential thereupon." It was "for purposes consequential thereupon" that the Bill was introduced. A peddling anomaly here and there was to be redressed in the name of electoral equality, within areas occupied by Liberal interests; but outside those areas electoral inequalities were to abound and flourish. The Liberal garden was to be neat and well trimmed, but outside the gates the political weeds and thistles might grow rank. This was a policy which might win the cheers and secure the votes of the partisans of the Government; but it would not commend itself to the fair sense of the community, and even if carried into law it would ultimately recoil on the heads of those who had proposed it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, that the criticisms of the Opposition had gone far to reconcile him to the moderation of the present Bill. He entirely agreed with a large part of what fell from the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who was selected by his Party to move the Amendment, and who performed his task in a speech at once frank and reasonable; indeed, the only point on which he disagreed was that dealing with the plural voter; but the right hon. Member for Bury's speech was quite reactionary and utterly antagonistic to all that might have been expected from him. The right hon. Gentleman said that in 1884 not a single individual was disfranchised; he might have added that certain extraordinary persons were enfranchised, thus showing the stress in which the Liberal Party of the day was, seeing that it made a compact with the Tory Party to actually put back on the electoral roll a corrupt and rotten body of freemen who had been disqualified from voting by the verdict of the Judges. He agreed that the present Bill was not perfect. There was no means of providing a simple machinery for registration except by a Bill for manhood suffrage. In no other way could they escape the terribly entangling detail and cumbrousness which characterised this and similar Bills. No better illustration of this could be taken than the position of the lodger, who was electorally in an inextricable position. It was impossible to say what was the law with respect to the lodger, and the only way to simplify his position would be to abolish him. That could be done without disfranchisement by simply repealing every section providing for the lodger franchise, since it had been held that a room was "a dwelling." Every cubicle might be held to be a dwelling-house, and all that was required was to drop the £10 valuation. In the City of Derry they had a very close fight every year. So keen were the Party contests in Derry that there were more registration appeals from that one city than there were from the whole of England, Scotland, and Wales. The fight was fought with the most astonishing vigour, any amount of money was lavished on the voter, who, from the day that he was born, had his career closely watched by election agents on both sides; in fact, the voter was so closely watched that if a man got drunk and was put in the cells for 24 hours he was objected to, and probably lost the franchise. The charges at the police courts were eagerly followed. The composition of the Bench, too, became a question of considerable nicety, because if the man charged with drunkenness were an Orangeman he was only fined, and he if were a Catholic he was sent to gaol. That interesting person the lodger, of course, turned up at the Registration Courts in great force, and he would give the House the details of a very interesting case, details sworn upon oath, and of course absolutely reliable, as the claimant was a divinity student. The finding of the Judges was that this gentleman, Mr. Alexander M'Vicar, occupied separately as a sole tenant, at a yearly rent of £16, lodgings in his father's house at Derry. But being a student in Queen's College, Belfast, he, for the purpose of his divinity studies, lived seven months of the year in the city, and although during his absence he continued to occupy and pay rent for his lodgings in his father's house, his board and lodging in Belfast were paid for by his father. He was held to be entitled to be placed on the list of voters for the City of Derry, and the Court of Appeal held that the decision should be affirmed, though some of them did not like the conclusion arrived at by the Revising Barrister. That was the position of the lodger. Now as to the occupier. There was in the City of Derry a very large and prosperous warehouse occupied by a Mr. Pollock, who employed a very large number of assistants in his draper's shop. Being a sound Conservative he naturally desired that as many of his assistants as possible should have votes, but in 1893 only one had the vote. In Derry every man, woman, and child understood the Franchise Acts, and Mr. Pollock had heard of a decision which said that if a man occupied a room it was to him as a dwelling-house. His assistants slept in a large dormitory, and therefore they were not entitled to a vote; but Mr. Pollock divided the room into two, and, putting some of the assistants to sleep elsewhere, he got a vote for each department. Last year he divided the room into four, and got four votes. If a vote could be got by putting up a wooden partition, by-and-by the question would have to be considered what the texture of the partition must be. If wood could have a vote, why not a curtain? And if a room could be divided into four he could not see why people should not have swinging hammocks, as a ship, and divide a room into 24, and give 24 individuals a vote. As he understood the law, it was this—that if a man occupied as a lodger he must have rooms valued at £10 a year unfurnished, provided the landlord lived on the premises. But let the landlord go away, then his tenant would have a vote as an inhabitant occupier, no matter what the valuation. On the other hand, if a man occupied as an inhabitant occupier a house and the landlord took it into his head to occupy a portion of it the tenant was converted into a lodger. There was no principle in the law as it stood, and if he had to advise the Government in the matter he would recommend them to abolish the lodger franchise altogether. The lodger would then have absolutely the same right to vote as now, because he might then vote, not as a lodger, but as an inhabitant occupier. In his judgment, the lodger franchise was no longer a necessity; it was an anomaly and a pitfall, and it would be useless to tinker with it by reducing the qualification from £10 to £5, as some Members seemed to desire. The right hon. Member for Bury had objected to the way in which the singular pluralist was treated under the Bill. That was what the Government had got for their moderation. They had given the pluralist the option of voting wherever he pleased, but if the proper course had been taken it should have been provided that the pluralist should vote only for the place at which he resided. That would have been a sensible thing to do, and it would have occurred to anybody but a draftsman. The Bill in many of its provisions was a Tory rather than a Liberal Bill, and had been framed upon consideration of the treatment it might receive in the House of Lords. That House was the light by which the Liberal mariner had been obliged to steer. As to the shortening of the qualification period, it would matter very little to Ireland, where there was never a large floating population. But he strongly disapproved of the proposal for a double revision. Hon. Gentlemen, of course, would understand that he was speaking only for Ireland. In cases like the London constituencies, and some constituencies in the North of England, there was something to be said for the double revision, but how would it work in Ireland? He would take the County of Cork, a county almost as big as Yorkshire. It returned seven Members. In that county the same men were on the list from year to year, except such as died or went to America. Of course, new men came on occasionally as they attained the age of 21, but why should the County Cork be saddled with the expenses of the double revision and with the cost of the double printing of the lists? There was no acute contest between the Parties in the county. The people were all Nationalists. They were born Nationalists, and they died Nationalists, and they would always be so, just as Tories were born Tories and died Tories, and so they always would be. Accordingly, as far as counties like Cork were concerned, there was very little to be said in favour of the bi-annual revision. He would take, however, the case of one of the divisions of Belfast, one of Dublin, one of the divisions of the County Dublin, and some constituencies in Ulster, like County Tyrone, South Derry, North Fermanagh, possibly South Armagh, North Monaghan, and South Down. The County of Tyrone occupied an extraordinary position. It was the most blistered county in Ireland under the benefits of the franchise law. According to the Return supplied to the hon. Member for South Antrim, it was found that in the County of Tyrone in 1886 there were no fewer than 26,000 objections. Every one of these objections bore a 3d. stamp, and the cost for stamps alone amounted to

£350. Then both sides sent in bogus claims: it was perhaps unnecessary to state that elementary fact, and there could be no doubt that there was a considerable change in the Register every year. Parties had to be very closely watched there. In many respects when a Catholic died a landlord always put in the widow as the representative in the rent-book, so as to kill the Catholic vote. If a Protestant voter died the eldest son was always put in the tenancy in order to get the vote, and recently in North Tyrone, under the genial ægis of the Abercorns, they had gone the length of splitting up the farms, and having tenants in quo, as he thought they were called. He had in his mind a case in which three brothers were put down as owners. In that way, if there was a farm of land, and there was any pretext for a change of tenancy, and there were three brothers put into the agent's books, they would give the three names as owners, the whole thing being a pocket arrangement between them in order that these Protestant Conservative tenants might have the franchise. But when a poor Catholic died it was always the representatives or the widow—Mary Murphy, or something, that was put down in the rent-book. A great deal could be said in favour of the double revision provided in the Bill in the abstract; but there were such things as human life, temper, and money; and the conclusion he had come to was that life was not long enough for operations as they were conducted in Tyrone and Ulster. If anybody went into the Revision Court in Ulster the one side charged the other with perjury, and, as far as he was concerned, he had no desire to have these charges repeated twice a year, and not merely in the cool of October and November, but in the spring, when young men's fancy lightly turned to thoughts of revolt. He thought, therefore, that so far as Ireland was concerned it would be better, on the whole, to leave things as they were. Then, coming to the question of polling on one day, the Leader of the Opposition said it would lead to increased expenses, and that it would be extremely undesirable also on account of the difficulty of polling all the districts. In that he entirely differed from the right hon. Gentleman. There would be no difficulty whatever in Ireland on the question of police. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I was referring to England.] He was only speaking of Ireland—he had only one song. The right hon. Gentleman enjoyed the advantage of being able to doctrinise about other things than Ireland, but he did not. In Ireland there would be no difficulty in concentrating the police at the few polling stations allowed under the Ballot Act, and, as a rule, the people were very amenable. There was a great desire on the part of the people of both sides that they should be allowed to exercise the franchise, which they regarded as a great privilege. There might be an occasional contest at a General Election, but there would be no difficulty as to police in Ireland at these times. No extra expense would be imposed upon candidates, but there would be extra expense imposed upon the Sheriff, and serve him right. At present he pocketed their money. If he had a poll in the northern division of the county on Monday he would use the ballot boxes, the clerks, and so forth, and charge the candidates in that division, and on the Wednesday he might have a poll in the southern division, when he would use the boxes and the clerks over again, and charge the candidates in the southern division. It was right that the clerks should be paid for, but the boxes and the books could not eat and drink. The Bill would be a great loss to the Sheriffs and everyone keenly interested in them, but as far as the candidates and the public were concerned, they would not be likely to grieve. The Sheriff's expenses and his allowances were heavy, and so far as he was concerned a little blood-letting would not be out of place. With regard to the reduced qualification of three months, the hon. Member for the Southport Division had said that a Liberal candidate might bring Irish labourers into Southport to qualify. That was hardly a likely state of things, but it must be remembered that if those men were absent from Ireland for four months they were disfranchised, even though they paid their rates and taxes at home, and if they could not vote in Ireland they certainly ought to be allowed to vote in England. If they happened to be enjoying the breezes of Southport they should be allowed to record their votes there.

They must have their votes somewhere, whether at home or in England, and he (Mr. Healy) saw nothing wrong in their voting in England. It was assumed that in a constituency where there was a small majority against the Liberal Party an astute Liberal agent familiar with all the tactics of jobbery would take 500 voters in a balloon, and plant them down where their support would be serviceable, concealing everything from the stupid Tory agent, who would not have his eyes about him, who would have no money, and who would have had no Party spirit. But what would such an operation cost? Where would the funds come from, and were there no such thing as reprisals? But these objections were objections which might be levelled against any scheme, however worthy it might be. There was, however, one objection to which attention should be drawn—and he wondered that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury when he was so furiously engaged in slashing windmills had not suggested it. The plural voter was to be deprived of his plural votes, but was to be allowed to be on the Register for several places. There were, no doubt, constituencies—he knew some in Ireland—where when the elector had voted in the place for which he had a right to vote sympathisers would vote for him in the other places. These vices were not confined to one side, and when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury had stood forward with such an extraordinary affectation of Roman virtue, his (Mr. T. M. Healy's) mind had gone back to the year 1883, when the right hon. Gentleman introduced his very virtuous Corrupt Practices Act, which was vigorously attacked by the late Mr. Raikes. The right hon. Gentleman was at the time Member for Taunton. He made his Act date from the day of its passing. Under that Act they could inquire into all future corruption and speculation in a constituency, but they could never inquire how things had been done in the past in Taunton. He remembered Mr. Raikes taunting the right hon. Gentleman with that, and at that time he (Mr. Healy) was a supporter of the right hon. Gentleman's. At that time he believed in the right hon. Gentleman's virtue.

SIR E. CLARKE said, he had moved the Amendment to the Corrupt Practices Bill under which matters prior to the passing of the Bill could not be inquired into, and the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had accepted it.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that if that were so, Mr. Raikes must have spoken in vain. His words were on the record, but after 11 years one spoke with some infirmity of recollection. If he had thought his statement would have been challenged he would have refreshed himself from that volume of entertainment—*Hansard's Debates*. There ought to be some provision in the Bill for ascertaining, especially in close contests, which was the right vote and which was the wrong one given by a man, and he thought it would come to this—that a man would have to be called upon to declare at the time the Register was being made up which place he intended to vote for, and his name should be starred accordingly. Going back to the question of bi-annual registration, no doubt as far as England was concerned something of the kind was necessary, but if it were adopted it ought only to be a supplemental provision. And a man ought not to be called upon to fight a second objection. He should not have to fight an objection a second time except in cases where he had absolutely quitted his tenancy. If it could be shown that a man was dead, or had gone away, his vote might be struck off. And it seemed to him that a great deal of expense might be saved in the matter of printing. As an election would only take place every four or five years, and the chances were five to one against the second Register being called in, he did not see why the second Register could not be made by a type writer. Even if some arrangement of that kind were not come to, he would advise the Liberal Party not to shirk the expense. The printing of the Register was after all less costly than a Tory Government. It was cheaper for the taxpayer to pay for a second Register than to have an odd war in hand or a "spirited foreign policy." As regarded the position of Ireland in this Debate, they had got reason to congratulate themselves that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had been almost entirely forgotten. He had thought that they would have heard some tremendous indictment against the Irish representation in this Debate, but nothing of the kind. It had been shown that the inequalities in England were so great that Ireland in that respect might hide her diminished head. But if that were not so, he would not be afraid to take his stand on the absolute facts of the case. When was the question of numbers first considered in connection with Irish representation? If there had been a numerical basis at the time of the Union, Ireland would have had 250 instead of 100 Members O'Connell, time after time, showed the under-representation of Ireland, and the answer of the great English statesmen of that day always was, "Oh, the case of Ireland rests upon a sacred Treaty." It was a mean thing on the part of the Party which had decimated Ireland with war, famine, and pestilence to take advantage of their own wrong. In 1847 the population of Ireland was 8,000,000; in 1894, under the blessed *régime* of an enlightened Administration, it had fallen to 4,500,000. Until 1886 one English Party was as bad as another in this matter; and the laws which they had passed had driven the people out of Ireland. Irishmen lived a long way from Westminster; and they did not wish to interfere in British affairs at all. What Ireland desired was that she should be allowed to manage her own squalid parochial affairs at home in her own ignorant and, he supposed, brutish manner. They never, of course, could hope for the enlightenment or civilisation of Englishmen, or to attain to the high and noble examples they got in that House. There were geographical considerations and difficulties to be taken into account. It cost an Irish Member a £5 note to go and come from Ireland; it cost many English Members 1s. for a hansom cab. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth was quite frank in admitting that even if his Amendment were passed he would not be better satisfied with the abolition of the dual vote. If the dual voter required protection he had a whole House in the House of Lords to protect him. Let the common people have a vote in the House of Commons. They should maintain the position that all men were free and equal, and he would submit that the Bill proposed by the Government contained propositions of justice and equality which entitled it to the support of those who had faith in the principles of freedom and equality.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had joined in the general condemnation which almost every Member, no matter on what side he sat, had pronounced against the Bill. He (Mr. Heneage) thought that, in view of this general condemnation, he was within his right in asking the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the measure, when he came to speak, to reply to the query of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury as to why the Government had changed their mind and had departed from the decision to which they arrived last year, and upon which they had given such forcible expression of opinion. It was clear from what had fallen from every Member of the House who had discussed the Bill that the House generally was of opinion that a second revision would be distinctly costly and useless; therefore, as no defence had been offered of that portion of the Bill, they had a right to know whether this provision was not really still-born? He wished to call attention to some sections of the measure which had rather fallen out of sight, and to discuss them as far as he could in a practical spirit. It must be remembered that in 1891 a Resolution was moved laying down what ought to be provided for in a Registration Bill. They had a Bill brought in by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax giving expression to the opinion of the Government, and last year the present Secretary for India brought in a Bill dealing with the subject. They had a right to know why the Government had changed their mind, and why the present measure was different to that of last year. Nothing was done in the present Bill to facilitate the lodger getting upon the Register, or to render easy the transfer of the voter in successive occupations in the same constituency, or his transfer from one constituency to another in the same county. Then the revision proposed as to the period of qualification was entirely fictitious. What people in this country desired to know was not so much what their period of qualification was to be, but how soon after they had come into residence they would be permitted to vote. And as to the proposal to have two Registers for the suggested period of qualification, he should have thought that if there was to be a three months' qualification there ought to be four Registers, but he did not suppose that that was a thing which any Government would care to propose. With regard to the agricultural districts, to which the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean referred, the tenancies commenced on Lady Day and on May Day. As the Bill was drawn, any person desiring a vote on the three months' qualification previous to the 24th of June, if he had come into occupation on Lady Day or May Day, would be prevented from claiming for another six months. In dealing with this subject the Government ought to have had regard to the period of the year at which people came into residence. The Government seemed to have an idea that the 1st of January should be the day when the residence should come into force, but January was the last month upon which any Government would think of having a General Election. If the date had been the 1st or the 15th of February, those who came into occupation on Lady Day or May Day would have been able to claim——

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow at Two of the clock.

### BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 3) BILL. (No. 212.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

**Mr. BYLES** (York, W.R., Shipley) said, the measure was one which set out the views of the Building Societies.

**The Marquess of CARMARTHEN** (Lambeth, Brixton) asked whether objection had not been made by the Government to a Bill of a similar character to this?

**The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS** (Mr. H. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) said, that one clause of that Bill was different from the Government Bill, and the measure was withdrawn on the understanding that this particular clause should be carefully considered by the Committee.

**Mr. CREMER** (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked whether a Bill of practically the same character as this was not before the House last year and considered by a Committee upstairs. If so, was it worth while for the time of the Grand Committee to be wasted in considering a Bill the provisions of which were considered last year?

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

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### CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 3) (ABERDARE, &C. CANALS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Tolls and Charges applicable thereto for the Aberdare Canal Navigation and certain other Canals, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Mr. Mundella.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 215.]

### SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Seton-Karr, Bill to amend the Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Dane, and Colonel Nolan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 217.]

### MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. David Thomas, Bill to reduce the Hours in Welsh Mines to Eight Hours per day, ordered to be brought in by Mr. David Thomas and Mr. Lloyd-George.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 218.]

### METROPOLIS LOCAL MANAGEMENT (ST. PAUL, DEPTFORD) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Darling, Bill to amend "The Metropolis Local Management Act, 1855," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Darling, Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Boord, Mr. Benn, Mr. Pickersgill, and Colonel Hughes.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 219.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Friday, 4th May 1894.*

## THE WHITSUNTIDE RECESS.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Seeing the noble Lord the Prime Minister in his place, I venture to ask him whether he has formed any designs as to the apportionment of the severe labours of this House during the forthcoming week. When does he propose that we should adjourn?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of ROSEBERY): My Lords, with regard to that very important point, I understand that my noble and learned Friend has been in communication with the Opposition on the subject, and that the conclusion has been arrived at (which I think will be gratifying to your Lordships) that we might adjourn, without difficulty or danger to your Lordships, from Thursday next to Monday in the ensuing fortnight.

## COLONIAL OFFICERS (LEAVE OF ABSENCE) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 25.)

### THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): My Lords, I am sorry to say that my noble Friend (the Marquess of Ripon) is not able to be in his place to-day. He has asked me to move the Third Reading of this Bill and to make a statement with regard to a point which was raised by the noble Marquess in reference to the extension of the Bill to officers in the service of the Indian Government. My noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been in communication with the India Office on the subject, and he has arrived at the conclusion that the proposal suggested—namely, that the Bill should extend to Indian Officers—would make it a controversial one. There is certainly not an absolute agreement upon the subject, and I think that will be evident to the noble Marquess from what fell from the late Viceroy of India on the last occasion. I think my noble Friend will understand the anxiety of the noble Marquess not to make a Bill, which is certainly not of a controversial character, a controversial measure, by the introduction of provisions which might endanger its passing without any compensating advantages. That is the reason why the noble Marquess does not propose to deal with that subject in this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 3ª accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL. (No. 32.)

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

## SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE PROCEDURE BILL [H.L.].—(No. 37.)

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

## LIMITATION OF ACTIONS BILL [H.L.]. (No. 39.)

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

## SOLICITORS' EXAMINATION BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

## ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 4) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Aberdeen, Birmingham, Chelmsford, and Guildford—Was presented by the Lord Monkswell (for the Lord Playfair); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 47.)

## QUARTER SESSIONS BILL [H.L.].—(No. 4.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments to be printed, and to be considered on Monday next. (No. 48.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, 4th May 1894.*

The House met at Two of the clock.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### CAMBRIDGE CORPORATION BILL (*by Order*).

Bill, as amended, considered.

*MR. WEBB (Waterford, W.) said, that this Bill, to Section 6 of which he and others objected, had been approved and amended, after full and patient consideration, by a competent Committee upstairs. It had the support of the heads of the University as well as the Corporation of Cambridge, and the Committee could scarcely have done otherwise than pass it back to the House. It was in no spirit of opposition to them—with no desire to call in question their labours or judgment—that he now felt bound to strive to amend their work. The Committee had to do with details. The House had to do with general principles and to guard individual rights against what might be the wishes of localities, unless they were shown very good reason for letting those wishes prevail. It would be beside the present question to retort that many of them admitted individual rights would be better guarded if the guarding power was not so centralised as at present. They had to deal with the constitution of affairs, and under that constitution they were driven to take up the precious time of this Assembly with the consideration of what at first sight was a trivial, but which was in truth an important, matter. The Bill had to do with Cambridge University jurisdiction over persons and entertainments, with corporate control over bridges, commons, markets and fairs, public-houses, health, and so forth. It would doubtless be beneficial in many respects—in no one more so than where it sought to repeal rights over persons conferred in Queen Elizabeth's reign—entirely out of keeping with our present conceptions of liberty. To one section only did they object—that by which 6 Geo. IV., c. 97, sec. 3, modifying 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, sec. 3 at present applying in Oxford was sought to be applied to Cambridge. They would desire the repeal regarding Oxford of this modification, and they strenuously opposed its extension to Cambridge under 5 Geo. IV., c. 83, sec. 3—

> "Every common prostitute wandering in the public streets or public highways or in any place of public resort, behaving in a riotous or indecent manner"

might, upon conviction, be committed

> "to the House of Correction, there to be kept to hard labour for any term not exceeding one calendar month."

He (Mr. Webb), and those who were acting with him, had no objection whatever to this clause. It was reasonable that women as well as men behaving in a riotous or indecent manner should be arrested and punished. The modification consisted in omitting the words—

> "Behaving in a riotous and indecent manner."

The clause would stand—

> "Every common prostitute and night walker found wandering in any public walk, street, or highway, within the precincts of the said University, and not giving a satisfactory account of herself, shall be deemed an idle and disorderly person," &c., "and may be apprehended and dealt with accordingly."

They strenuously objected to putting it in the power of any underling of the University to charge any woman with being a prostitute and to hale her to prison. The following extract from a local paper would show that in the estimation of some the power had not always been fairly exercised in Oxford. Indeed it was most unlikely that such irresponsible power could be exercised without abuse. "An Oxford Citizen" wrote in *The Oxford Chronicle* of February 13, 1892—

> "I wish to draw the attention of your readers seriously to the tyranny and cruelty practised by the University towards girls in our midst. If a girl has ever lapsed from the path of virtue, or if the bulldogs, no fair judges, believe so, she has no liberty, no peace. She dare not appear in the street or wait for a public conveyance without risk of being seized by the University spies, when, as a matter of course, she is sent to prison. Our girls are systematically watched by these bulldogs, and notes taken of all their acts, which in the not too impartial imagination of these men are believed to indicate that they are loose women. Nothing is said at first about these things, but they are recorded; and should a poor girl be seized and taken before the Vice-Chancellor, then out they come on oath, with the date of each, after months, or even years from their

> occurrence, when the poor girl no longer has any chance of showing that they are true or false. The affair is always so hurried that the girl has no chance of getting legal help, which, also, she is generally too poor to do, and so, without any cross-examination, the statements of these fellows are received as gospel by the Vice Chancellor and other University Dons eager to send her to gaol."

The Courts being held at irregular intervals, the presence of reporters is not always assured.

> "If they can prove that ever in her life she has done a questionable act, she is at their mercy, and all liberty to move about in our streets is denied her."

What would men say if the same judgment were meted out to them? If it was right that such powers should be conferred upon constables in Cambridge, they should not be withheld from constables all over the Kingdom. Why should Oxford and Cambridge be specially singled out from other University towns in England, in Scotland, and in Ireland? The young men in Universities were better watched and guarded than the young men outside their walls. If such legislation were necessary regarding University towns, it would be more necessary in large cities where young men were free from the vigilance of proctors and their "bulldogs." The principles embodied in this proposed section received by implication the strongest condemnations from this House, when the Contagious Diseases Acts were repealed. He and his friends objected on principle to such legislation as affecting only one sex, and it was somewhat of a comment on the capacity of men under all circumstances to represent the interests of women that this Bill should have passed so far entirely unchallenged, and that it would most probably now pass unchallenged but for the vigilance of some ladies who had brought it under the notice of certain Members of the House. The proposal was on the face of it specious. The objection to it was that which lay against most legislation of an autocratic or a paternal character. The purpose was apparently effected, but at the cost of a harmful infringement of general principles. Such autocratic legislation might lead to certain apparent benefits, but at the expense of diminution of respect for law and individual rights. Prostitution was fed mainly by the want amongst men of proper respect for women. Laws such as this applied to women and not to men tended to foster such want of respect. Women suffered in many ways. They were left unprotected and at the mercy of designing men, who often escaped without punishment for the most heinous crimes, because it would not be possible under all circumstances to guard women without laying innocent men open to ruin from damning accusations. Men must on their side be content to look out for themselves, and by cultivating high principle and resisting temptation to shield themselves from evil lest the law in too closely attempting to shield them should leave innocent women open in like manner to unjust suspicions and damning accusations. Constables were by no means perfect instruments. They too often had a fatal propensity to stick to and justify charges once made—a fatal *esprit de corps* in supporting each other. Temptation should not be placed in their way. Mistakes would be made in the future as they had been made in the past, and it was much to be doubted that in the past they knew all or the worst cases. What more efficient instrument for blackmailing women could they place within the reach of any man than a provision such as that they were considering? Many a poor girl would part with her last penny sooner than let it be known, even to those nearest to her, that an accusation, however falsely, had been made regarding her chastity. The poorer the most defenceless classes of women, those whose avocations might oblige them to be out alone perhaps at night, would be most likely to suffer. The freedom that women, young and old, in these countries enjoyed as compared to the freedom accorded them on the Continent was largely due to the absence here of legislation such as that they were considering. Objectionable as such a law would be in any University town it was especially to be condemned in Cambridge, because of the large number of young women studying at Girton and Newnham. This consideration especially came home to such of them as had relatives and friends at one or other of these Colleges. The complacency with which such legislation was regarded by many was illustrative of the degree to which the law esteemed property—more sacred than person. What would more tend to morality than the suppression of houses of ill-fame, most of which were well known to the police? Regarding them suspicion counted for nothing. Proof, most difficult of attainment, was demanded. Lest the rights of property should be infringed, such houses were permitted to continue centres of the worst social degradation of the worst forms of immorality, whilst under this Bill suspicion alone would be sufficient ground for depriving a woman of her liberty—sufficient ground for condemning her to hard labour and blasting her reputation for life. The proceedings at the Women's Liberal Association two days ago would show how thoughtful women regarded the Bill. A document he held in his hand, signed by the Countess of Carlisle, President of the Federation, on May 2, set forth—

> "The Council of the Women's Liberal Federation, nearly 900 strong, and representing 76,000 women, have to-day passed a resolution condemnatory of the unjust and demoralising enactment proposed to be introduced by Clause 6 of the Cambridge Corporation Bill. They consider it unconstitutional, as putting the burden of proof upon the accused, and open to arbitrary and capricious interpretation for want of legal definitions of all the terms employed."

The resolution carried was as follows:—

> "That this Council is of opinion that the special jurisdiction as exercised over women at the University towns—Oxford and Cambridge—is both degrading and unjust, and calls for its immediate abolition, and, further, views with alarm the proposed Bill now before the House of Commons, which will give to the proctors and police in Cambridge authority to arrest any woman who is merely walking in the streets, and whom they choose to consider of immoral character, and will render any such woman liable to imprisonment with hard labour as an idle and disorderly person, unless she can give a satisfactory account of herself. This Council, therefore, earnestly hopes that such exceptional and unconstitutional legislation may be rejected by the House of Commons, and that all such cases may be left to the ordinary law."

Such legislation would defeat its object, and might in the long run intensify the evils it was meant to restrain. He believed that the provisions of the ordinary law, if properly enforced, were sufficient to meet the necessities of the case, and that exceptional legislation was undesirable. Under the ordinary law a woman who was disorderly could be punished; but to pass an exceptional law by which a woman might be imprisoned for merely walking in the street is to create a new offence, and to give a dangerous power to the proctors and policemen which must be extremely liable to abuse. Men must learn to respect all women as they respected their own relatives. They must bend their souls to that chastity which was possible, and was to be demanded of them as it was universally acknowledged to be possible and was demanded of women. He begged to move the omission of Clause 6 of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, to leave out Clause 6.—(*Mr. Webb.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

MR. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, they had been told that when no opposition was offered the Committee upstairs did not go into the general principles of Bills of this kind. He could assure the House that this was an incorrect description of the method which the Committee pursued. The Government Departments reported upon the Bills, and in some cases recommended changes and in other cases called the attention of the Committee to any exceptional proposals, and asked that they should consider them and accept responsibility. When no objection or comment was made by the Departments the Committee all the same went through the Bills clause by clause, and if matters affecting general principles were contained therein they did not pass them without due consideration. In this instance the Home Office made no Report to the Committee, and they formed the opinion that there was no objection to the proposals of the Bill. Notwithstanding that fact, they were alive to the fact that changes were to be made in the law in this particular case. The attention of the Committee was called by counsel to the fact that the law of Cambridge was to be altered and brought into conformity with that existing in the Sister University town of Oxford. The Committee, therefore, were well aware of what was proposed to be done, and what he wished to tell the House before they proceeded to the further consideration of the matter was that the hon. Gentleman was not correct when he said that the Committee did not consider on their merits the Bills brought before them, even if the Departments did not criticise them. This was an unopposed Bill, not criticised by the Government Department concerned, and brought before the Committee as one which had been agreed upon by the Corporation and the University authorities. It proposed to repeal an Act which gave special powers to the University of Cambridge, and to confer on the University town the same powers that Oxford possessed. He would not deal with the matter from the point of view of either the Corporation or the University, because both had competent Representatives in the House. He had only risen for the purpose of stating what were the facts in regard to the proceedings before the Committee of which he was Chairman, and to assure the House that whether their action was right or wrong it was taken with their eyes open and with a perfect knowledge of the proposals that were being made. He hoped the House would bear this in mind in coming to any decision upon this question adverse to the opinion of the Committee upstairs—that they would destroy the arrangement which had been come to between the University authorities and the Corporation, which, in the opinion of the Committee, substituted for the present provisions others which were more equitable and certainly were not calculated to lead to the abuses which were feared by the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Amendment.

Mr. PENROSE FITZGERALD (Cambridge) said, he wished to congratulate the Mover of the Amendment upon the temperate speech which he had made concerning this very thorny and unpleasant subject. He would, however, recall the attention of the House to the facts of the case with which they were dealing. Some hon. Gentlemen seemed to think that this was a Bill for conferring further powers upon the University authorities of Cambridge. That was not so. In fact, the Bill took away powers from the University authorities—powers which the town thought ought to be removed out of their hands. The history of the Bill was a very long one, and he would not go into the Charters of Queen Elizabeth or Henry VIII., or the numerous old Statutes referring to the University, but simply remind the House that this question had been before them on several previous occasions. In 1892 the Member for Cambridge introduced a Bill dealing with the topic which met the fate that private Members' Bills, even in those early days, used to meet and which he was afraid they would meet more frequently in the future. He wished to point out, in justice to the Mover of this Amendment and to the hon. Member for Crewe, that that Bill which was introduced in February, 1892, had in it a clause providing that Clause 28 of the Town Police Act, 1847, should for the purposes of its application in the town of Cambridge have effect as if it provided that

> "every common prostitute loitering or being in a street or public place for the purpose of prostitution or solicitation,"

&c., and that that Bill was backed by the hon. Member for Crewe.

Mr. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that that is the same provision as is in the Bill now?

Mr. PENROSE FITZGERALD said, he had said nothing of the sort. Before he touched on the genesis of the Bill, he wished, in reference to the Resolution which the hon. Member (Mr. Webb) had read as being passed by the Women's Federation, that he saw from *The Standard* newspaper that there were two ladies present, before whose name the word "Cambridge" was inserted, who were opposed to that resolution. This Bill was a compromise. Ever since the Bill of 1892 there had been a Joint Committee composed of the Council of the Senate of the University of Cambridge and a Committee of the Corporation of the borough, and they had sat frequently and at great length, and had threshed out all these matters. The committee was composed, so far as the town was concerned, of members of both political Parties, who considered that for the welfare of the town and its inhabitants this compromise was advisable. Over and over again the town had objected to the University authorities possessing these exceptional powers. He did not say that they had not been exercised with discretion; but the town objected to them, and he asked the House not to spoil the Bill by agreeing to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

Dr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked whether the powers exercised under Section 6 did not still remain with the University authorities?

Mr. PENROSE FITZGERALD said, no; they did not in his opinion and in the opinion of the Joint Committee. It was, of course, within the power of the House to throw this Bill out or to amend it in any way it liked, but he would ask whether it was not better in these days of local self-government and management of local affairs at home to assume that the Local Authorities were the best judges of local requirements and of the best way of dealing with this difficult and irritating and unpleasant question? It would, he thought, be impossible to take out any part of the compromise without rendering the Bill unacceptable to either the University authorities or to the Corporation. The Bill, if passed, would reduce to a minimum a grave cause of friction which had existed for a long time between the town and the University, and he asked the House, on behalf of the town, not to reject this Bill, or to so mutilate it that neither Party could accept it. The *modus vivendi* had been arranged, and all they asked was that the House should sanction it, so that the decency and morality of the town could be preserved. He hoped the Amendment would not be agreed to, and that the House would pass the Bill in the form in which it left the Committee upstairs.

*Mr. JEBB (Cambridge University) said, his hon. Friend the Member for the Borough of Cambridge had set forth the case for this Bill from the point of view of the town. He wanted to say a few words from the point of view of the University. First, as to the new powers given under this Bill. The law now in force was exercised under the powers of the Elizabethan Charter. The University proctors had power to arrest persons suspected of evil who came or resorted to the town; but it was proposed to abolish that power by Clause 5 of the Bill. The powers proposed by the Bill to be conferred upon the police enabled them to arrest any persons of presumably bad character found wandering in the public thoroughfares who could not give a satisfactory account of themselves; but such powers were to be exercised under peril of an action for false imprisonment if a person should be wrongly arrested. These powers existed at Oxford, and worked satisfactorily. The Bill also proposed to confer a similar power upon the proctors, who in this respect were to be placed upon precisely the same footing as the police, and who would have no more powers than the police. Thus the large and ancient powers of the proctors, under the Elizabethan Charter, were abolished, and the local law was brought nearer to the general law of the country. The Vice Chancellor's Court and the Spinning House were to be abolished, and persons arrested would be tried before the ordinary Court, which was the Bench of Borough Magistrates. The result of the proposed change would be that the law of Cambridge, although brought nearer to the ordinary law of the country, would still go somewhat beyond it, inasmuch as a policeman or proctor could arrest a woman found in a public thoroughfare whom they suspected to be of immoral character, even if she was not guilty of riotous or indecent behaviour. There were precedents for variation of powers in the police laws in different localities. For instance, the Edinburgh Act of 1879 conferred power on the police to arrest a woman for loitering or importuning.

Mr. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): Does it not go on to say "for the purposes of prostitution"?

*Mr. JEBB said, that in the case of the proposed Cambridge law, an immoral purpose would indeed be presumed by the officer making an arrest, but the presumption would be made at his own peril. He would now go on to say a few words about the reasons which, in their opinion, existed for conferring special powers, which, if this Bill passed, would be peculiar to Cambridge along with Oxford. The first was the position of the students in the University towns of Oxford and Cambridge. These students were young and inexperienced men, freshly released from the discipline and restriction of school life, who, in the Universities, enjoyed a certain measure of independence, and who, from their position as young men enjoying that measure of liberty, tended to attract to Oxford and Cambridge numbers of women of bad character. Some of the students formed an easy prey for such persons, if due precautions were not taken. The number of students in Cambridge was usually about 3,000, and the total population of the town at the last Census was under 37,000. It would be seen, therefore, how large a fraction the students formed of the population, and it was easy to understand that women of bad character would be attracted to the town, not only from the surrounding country, but from London. The responsibility of the University authorities was not merely as to the teaching of the students, but as to their conduct and morals. They were bound to prevent as far as possible undue temptation from being thrown in the way of the undergraduates ; it was a duty they owed not only to the students, but to the parents of the students, and, above all, to the nation at large. What more serious evil could there be than that the undergraduates in a University town should be exposed to the temptations which some London streets presented daily and nightly ? Why was the ordinary law insufficient ? Under the ordinary law a woman could not be apprehended unless she were guilty of disorderly or indecent conduct, or unless solicitation could be proved against her. But women of bad character might be perfectly quiet in their external behaviour and might abstain from open solicitation, yet their presence in the public places might constitute a temptation just as much as though they were guilty of solicitation or disorderly conduct. If Cambridge were left under the ordinary powers of the police nothing could be more certain than that there would be a great influx of women of loose character from London. Could the House contemplate with satisfaction the prospect of the principal streets in Cambridge resembling certain streets in London ? Nothing could be more disastrous to education in the University. Under the Elizabethan Charter the powers of the proctors were greater than they were under this Bill. To say that the mere walking in the streets would be constituted an offence was to presume that the law would be administered without discretion, intelligence, or ordinary caution ; and it must be remembered that the proctors and constables would exercise their exceptional powers at their own peril. During the last two years, while these negotiations had been going on, there had been a marked deterioration in the state of the streets of Cambridge. This had been noticed, not only by members of the University, but by the Borough Council itself ; and the townspeople were just as anxious as the University that this Bill should pass into law. The Mayor of Cambridge called a public meeting under the Borough Funds Act, at which the clauses of the Bill were gone through, and Clause 6 was adopted practically unanimously. Clause 6 was a vital part of the Bill, and if it were rejected the Bill would be withdrawn. The measure, which settled so many controversies between the town and the University, would be wrecked, and the state of things which existed two years ago would be brought back again. It was not to be supposed that the University would acquiesce in the withdrawal of all control in such an important matter as this. He appealed to the wisdom and common sense of the House not to allow the action of well-meaning and sincere, but ill-advised and ill-regulated, zeal to defeat a measure which protected the interests of morality, and consequently the interests of the country at large.

Mr. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, before he replied briefly to the speeches of the hon. Members who had spoken, he should like to say a word in reference to the proceedings of the Committee which considered the Bill. He had to complain that they had been marked by a diversion from the course they pursued in former years when it was their custom, when they passed a Bill whose provisions were in excess of the ordinary law, to send in a Report explaining their reasons for allowing it to go through. He believed that the Standing Order under which this Committee was constituted specifically required that they should send in such a Report, and he complained that they had violated that Regulation. That Committee did not receive the usual instruction when they were applied this Session, because it was found that the Standing Orders met the requirements of the case. He could find no Report of that Committee, and they had merely reported the Bill to the House as amended. They had had no reason given to them why they should accept this legislation. The proceedings altogether of the Committee on this Bill were exceedingly brief. He had read the shorthand report of what took place, and while it was true that the counsel in charge of the Bill mentioned this matter, and that the Committee examined the

Mayor and the Vice Chancellor, all that was said was that there was practically no opposition to the Bill. The speeches of the hon. Member for Cambridge and the hon. Member for Cambridge University showed a discrepancy in this respect. It was quite evident from the speech of the hon. Member for the University that it was the University and not the town that was standing out for this provision. The town of Cambridge was willing to accept the clause in the Bill of 1891. He certainly backed that Bill, and he was willing to stand by the clause of 1891 now, and always was willing to stand by it, and perhaps the best thing would be that the Bill should be recommitted for the substitution of that clause. He supposed the hon. Member for Cambridge University would support a Motion of that sort. But in addition to that, to show the feeling of the Corporation on the matter, he might say that he had seen more than one letter from the Mayor of Cambridge, stating that the Liberal Members of the Council objected to this particular clause, and that it was forced upon them by the University. It was, in fact, a price which had been wrung out of the town by the University.

Mr. PENROSE FITZGERALD: In a question of arbitration you cannot speak of anything having been forced on you. The clause was agreed to in consideration of something else.

Mr. W. M'LAREN said, he had already stated that it was a price that the town had to pay, and he thought it was a very high price indeed; and it exhibited the terrorism which the University had exercised when the Mayor of Cambridge said that if this Bill was not accepted now they would be unable to do anything more for a generation. The whole public opinion of the country, as well as of the town of Cambridge, was opposed to the special powers which existed under the Charter of Elizabeth; and to tell the House that this Bill would be withdrawn if the House exercised its prerogative, or to say that nothing could be done again for a generation, was to attempt to impose upon their credulity. While he was as anxious as the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge to do everything that was reasonable to protect the morals of the students, he believed that the necessity of the case would be met by the acceptance of the clause which was in the Cambridge Corporation Bill of three years ago, and which the Corporation themselves believed was amply adequate. This Bill deviated from the ordinary law in respect of Clause 6. He maintained that the ordinary law would meet all the necessities of the case if rigorously enforced. Women were already liable to be arrested for solicitation and for disorderly conduct under the Common Law, but he submitted that, however bad a character she might be, a woman who was walking peaceably and in a quiet manner along the street was as much entitled to be there as any other woman, or any man. That was a Constitutional principle from which the House was now asked to depart for the supposed benefit of Cambridge undergraduates, who presumably were not sufficiently strong-minded to look after themselves. Assuredly it was a very dangerous course to take to re-enact in the present state of public opinion an old and practically obsolete law of George IV. They were told that a provision of that clause was in operation at Oxford, but he hoped if ever the Corporation of that place came to Parliament with a Private Bill on any subject they would be able to strike at that clause. He had in his hand a letter from a doctor of 30 years' standing in Oxford whose name he was willing to give privately to the hon. Member for Cambridge, in which he said, as the result of his practical observation, that the operation of the clause at Oxford was most injurious. He was frequently consulted by young women *employés* in shops and other business establishments, and when he told them that what they needed was more exercise——[*A laugh.*] He could not understand that laugh; it said exceedingly little for the tone of mind and temper of hon. Members opposite that they should sneer and jeer at honest young women who were working in shops, and for whose health exercise was needed. To return to the letter, the writer informed him that when he advised these young persons to take more exercise, they replied that they dared not go into the streets of an evening because the Universities authorities were constantly on the look-out to run them in. This system afforded opportunities for blackmail, because any honest young woman, rather than have her character blasted for life by being run in, would pay any demand made upon her for money. He submitted that women should be as free as other citizens. A Memorial had been signed by ladies whose sons were undergraduates at Oxford stating that they did not desire at the expense of the women of Cambridge to have this exceptional legislation, even for the benefit of their sons; while the resolution of the Women's Liberal Federation, supported as it was by some 900 ladies interested in public and political affairs, ought to carry great weight with the House. He therefore urged the House to abolish this special legislation, which was not needed for young men anywhere else. His own University at Edinburgh did not want it, although there were more students there than in Cambridge; the University of Glasgow did not want it, and the University College of London did not want it. He refused to believe that the young men of Cambridge were less moral than those of any other town; they were able to take care of themselves, and, if strenuously enforced, as it would be, the ordinary law was amply sufficient to meet the case.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): As time is precious, and as I think the case has been extremely well stated from both sides upon this matter, I hope the House will now come to a decision. I do not rise to speak on behalf of the Government, or to exert any influence upon others, but what I owe to the University of Cambridge and to Cambridge generally forbids my being silent on this occasion. I speak my own sentiments and those of the Home Secretary. This question, as between the town and University of Cambridge has, to my certain knowledge, been a subject of very painful and injurious dispute for a great many years. The jurisdiction of the University of Cambridge was founded upon a very ancient Charter, and it was a jurisdiction which was much resented by the town of Cambridge. That was natural enough, but now I understand that the University and town of Cambridge have come to a unanimous accord as to how this question shall be settled. They desire a settlement upon a footing which both consider advantageous to the community. The hon. Gentleman has raised some question as to whether the town really does desire this clause, but I can myself take no opinion on that subject, except the official statement on the part of the Corporation which represents the town. It is said that this is exceptional legislation. So, in a certain sense, it is, unquestionably, but the University towns are in an exceptional position. I know something of University towns—I know a good deal of Cambridge, and I used to be at Oxford—and I am, therefore, entitled to express my own opinion on the subject. I say that in my belief, as in the belief of the towns themselves, they require exceptional provisions and exceptional protection. If you are to attach any weight whatever to local opinion and local government, you ought to listen to the voice both of the Universities and of the towns of Cambridge and Oxford. That voice should carry with it much more weight than the voice of individual Members, who probably had never belonged to either Oxford or Cambridge. A Select Committee of the House has approved the special clause inserted in the Bill, and I am satisfied that if the Corporation and those who represent the interests of Oxford have, as the hon. Member suggests, been dissatisfied with the law which has prevailed there for many years, they would not have left it to a single doctor to write about it, but would have taken very active measures to get rid of a state of things of which they did not approve. These are the reasons which influence me—I speak for myself alone—in supporting the provisions of the Bill. I think they are very reasonable provisions. The settlement of this long-disputed question between the University of Cambridge and the town is very desirable, and the House will, I think, do well to approve the Bill.

*MR. STANSFELD (Halifax) said, he very much regretted that he had not had an opportunity of speaking before the Leader of the House, because he had desired to make to the right hon. Gentleman an appeal which he now feared it was too late to make. But he would even now appeal to the Member for Cambridge and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University. The hon. Member for Cambridge had spoken of this as a compromise between the town and the University, but he had not pretended that that was an all-sufficient reason for agreeing to this particular clause, although the unusual course had been taken of threatening to withdraw the Bill unless the clause was retained in it. But all that sank into insignificance after the speech of the Leader of the House. He regretted that speech. There was an extension of the Criminal Law, and the doctrine of his right hon. Friend was Home Rule on a petty scale run mad. His doctrine was that the inhabitants of a borough were the best judges of what Criminal Law they desired for themselves, and that it was for the House to accept their judgment. What they wanted was a Contagious Diseases Act for the University and town of Cambridge, and if that was to be the policy of the Government he ventured to tell them that they had undertaken a very serious resonsibility with regard to their supporters, both in the House and in the country. He objected, and always had objected, to this insidious method of legislation by Private Bills, which could be promoted by persons in authority in any small locality, and which often resulted in changes of the Criminal Law of the country. What had been proposed by the authorities of the town and accepted by the authorities of the University was now the unanimous agreement of the town and University. It was desired that the position of Cambridge should be assimilated to the state of affairs which had existed in Oxford to the satisfaction of the University and the town for a great number of years. They did not ask for a new experiment to be made in legislation. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had said they were going to extend the Criminal Law. They were going to do nothing of the kind. They were going to mitigate the law as it at present existed in the University of Cambridge. The provision to which exception was taken said—

> "Every common prostitute and night walker found wandering in any public street or highway not giving a satisfactory account of herself shall be deemed to be an idle and disorderly person."

The law would apply not to every woman who walked about the street, but only to such persons as, when apprehended, could be proved to be common prostitutes and night walkers.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Is that before they are apprehended or after?

SIR J. GORST said, that if any proctor or constable took upon himself to apprehend a person who did not satisfy the definition of the Act of Parliament, he was liable to an action for false imprisonment. ["Oh, oh!"] He quite understood from the interruption of the hon. Member for Northampton and the jeers of other hon. Members that there was a section of the House who believed in the objection to which expression had been given by the hon. Member for Crewe, on the authority of an anonymous medical gentleman, that the civil population of Cambridge resented this kind of interference with their liberty. But they did not. He was very familiar with this kind of objection, because it was one he had constantly heard, years ago, in discussions that took place in the House respecting the Contagious Diseases Acts. No Contagious Diseases Act had ever been in force in Oxford or in Cambridge. But the Contagious Diseases Acts were in force in Chatham, a town he represented for 17 years, and he had frequently been told by the inhabitants of that town that the operation of those Acts had such an effect in clearing the streets of improper characters that their daughters could walk out at night without the danger they incurred before. It was curious how hon. Gentlemen opposite sometimes appealed to local wishes and sometimes scouted them. If they acted on local wishes they would pass this Bill. If they took upon themselves to override local self-government and to regulate Cambridge according to the views of the hon. Member for Crewe, then they would accept the Amendment.

MR. LABOUCHERE — [*Cries of* "Divide!"]—said, it was rather remarkable that, whilst hon. Members opposite were not very loth to waste the time of the House on other occasions, whenever there was a proposal to restrict or an attack on the liberty of individuals, they shouted "Divide, divide!" The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had hardly mended the case of his friends.

He had given as a reason why they ought to pass the Bill that it would produce the same effect in Cambridge as the Contagious Diseases Acts produced in the towns which were under those Statutes. He (Mr. Labouchere) wanted the House to understand the meaning of the clause. It was difficult to find out what it meant, as the copies of the Bill in the Bill Office were exhausted, but it was admitted that it was a compromise. It was a compromise between the University of Cambridge and the town, so that it could not then be said that the town was wholly in favour of it. The word "compromise" showed that the town was not in favour of it. The exercise of the powers conferred on the University Authorities had produced great abuse, and the Town Authorities had protested against it again and again. The town naturally wished to be under the same law as any other town in the United Kingdom. They were told that that could not be permitted, and that if the University gave up its ancient powers those powers would be adopted and carried out by the police. Therefore, he maintained that it could not be asserted to be the wish of the town that this Bill should pass in its present form. For his part he would vote with pleasure for any Bill which entirely abolished all the power which was to be possessed either by the University Authorities or the Police Authorities. The rights of men and women were not dependent upon the police nor upon the morality of individuals. A woman had got a perfect right to walk about the streets of Cambridge provided that she did not offend against the Common Law of the country, yet this Bill provided that a woman might be arrested by any policeman who took it into his head to suppose that she was a bad character. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that the policeman might be prosecuted afterwards if he arrested a respectable woman, but was that any guarantee that respectable women would not be arrested? Everyone knew perfectly well that when the Contagious Diseases Acts were in operation women of respectable character were frequently arrested by the police. No one had a greater respect for the police than he had, but he wished to know whether any gentleman meant to say that a policeman was invested with such vast intelligence that, on seeing a woman walking along the streets, he could tell whether she was respectable or the reverse? He contended that any woman had a right to walk in the streets of Cambridge provided she did not solicit or loiter or molest. The hon. Member for the University (Mr. Jebb) had said the House ought to pass this Bill, because there were in Cambridge young men who were inexperienced, and who would fall an easy prey to women. Well, he (Mr. Labouchere) would ask whether there were not such young men in London? He was not a young man himself, and he did not pretend to be an easy prey; but were there not many young men in London who were as liable to these temptations as the young men in Cambridge? Were there not also other Universities besides those of Oxford and Cambridge? Hon. Members knew very well that there were; and if it was thought that the effect of a superior education made a man a more easy prey than were the young men employed in shops, a similar Bill ought to be passed with regard to other University towns, including London, where there was a University. He objected to these local attacks upon private rights, and he specially objected to action of this kind being taken by attempting to sneak a clause through a Private Bill, and then telling the House that there was not time to discuss it fairly and legitimately.

Lord R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I have arrived at an opinion upon this question, having been one of the alumni at Oxford, and being a Doctor of Civil Law of Cambridge. I detected in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) the fanaticism that marks all his speeches on questions of this character. It is evident that it is impossible for him to take a reasonable view of what are the wishes of a locality or of a great University. It seems to be utterly impossible for him to recognise that the arrangement now proposed in the Bill has been tried for some years with great success in another University, which equals Cambridge in greatness. He can think of nothing but the Contagious Diseases Act, which has nothing to do with either the law of Oxford or that at Cambridge. This is a mere precautionary arrangement made with the object of securing some order and decency in the streets of an ancient University town. In these matters the University of Cambridge is co-operating with the Corporation of Cambridge just as the University of Oxford co-operate with the Corporation of Oxford. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has done what he always does; he has turned all ordinary conceptions of morality into ridicule. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Yes, he laughed at them. He never loses an opportunity of ridiculing ordinarily received opinions. Does he suppose that he is above everybody? Is his code of philosophy to be adopted by civilised society in England, and are great Educational Institutions to take their laws from him? He said he would speak for his University and for the town of Cambridge. He shall not speak for the town of Cambridge. He may speak for his own town of Northampton, where I daresay his morality goes down. The Leader of the House (Sir W. Harcourt) has appealed to his followers to pass this Bill. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, he supported the Bill, and if the Leader of a Party takes a particular course on a public question the Members of the Party usually follow him. The right hon. Gentleman speaks with great authority on a matter relating to Cambridge University, as he was intimately connected with the University for years, and held a very eminent Professorial Chair in the University. I know very well what is the motive that actuates gentlemen below the Gangway. It is the same motive as causes them to object to all Church establishments and to all Universities. They want to deprive the Universities of their representation in Parliament, to put an end to order and decency in the streets of University towns, and to turn the condition of affairs in those streets at night into a saturnalia. The Radical Party is ready to do anything to degrade the Universities. There is no injury they would not do to Universities like Oxford and Cambridge, which are old, which are famous, which have a long history, and which have done so much good not only amongst the wealthy classes, but, by the extension of University education, amongst the middle classes all over England. The hon. Member for Northampton said that no woman walking the streets at night ought to be molested by the police as long as she did not loiter, solicit, or molest.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Will the noble Lord excuse me? I do not think I said that. What I think I said was that a woman who does not loiter or solicit may be arrested.

Lord R. CHURCHILL: I beg pardon. I took down the hon. Gentleman's words, and what he said was that if a woman did not loiter or solicit or molest she ought not to be interfered with by the police. Well, Sir, that rule is carefully observed both in Oxford and Cambridge. You really strike a serious blow and utter a great insult to the University by saying that you will not trust them with the most moderate and most reasonable provision for preserving order in their town. All I can say is that if you do this you lay yourselves open to one more attack, and you are placing a strong case in our hands to lay before the country. I protest against the forces of the Radical Party, reinforced by the Irish Party, doing their best to destroy a University so ancient and so improving as that of Cambridge. I will not detain the House longer, but I must enter my protest against this insidious attempt to injure the great University of Cambridge.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) said, he hoped the House would allow him for a moment or two to explain why, as a Member of the Committee, he could not support this Clause 6, and intended to vote for the Amendment. He was absent from the House and the country for a considerable time, and this Bill came before the Committee when it was impossible for him to be present; had he been present he should have felt it his duty to oppose this clause. While recognising the fair way in which the hon. Gentleman who presided over this Committee referred to the functions and efforts of the Committee, he felt bound to say he thought they were not called upon to accept an agreement, merely because it was an agreement between the parties, if in their view it was contrary to what it ought to be. At the same time, he felt obliged to condemn his colleagues on that Committee if they did not insist upon evidence, and, as a matter of fact, no evidence was given on this point.

Why the ordinary law of the land would not suffice for Cambridge nothing was said —no evidence was given on that question. They were told of an ancient Charter from the time of Elizabeth and so on, but he did not understand why the House, at this time of the day, should be asked to compromise and strike a kind of average between the views held in the time of Elizabeth and the views held in 1894. It might be desirable to bear an old Statute for but a short time longer, but it was undesirable that the House should give sanction by conferring great powers upon a University to deal with the women of Cambridge, and the laws of the land ought to be enough to protect the collegians without a Bill of this kind. They knew that a Bill of this kind gave an enormous opportunity for blackmailing.

Major RASCH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

MR. H. J. WILSON said, they were not justified in giving these enormous powers to the police on the ground that they would not be exercised when given. He should certainly vote for the Amendment.

MR. DIAMOND (Monaghan, N.) said, that as a Member of the Committee he wished to say a word, and that was that they inquired very carefully as to what the local opinion on the subject was. It had been said by the hon. Member for Crewe (Mr. W. M'Laren) that there was a strong local feeling against it, and that he had some letter from the Mayor of Cambridge saying that the Local Council had a strong feeling against this clause. All he could say was that when the Mayor was in the chair giving evidence before the Committee he (Mr. Diamond) put the question to him whether there was a minority in the Council even opposed to it, and was there any local opposition, and the Mayor answered that there was no local opposition, and that he had neither heard of nor seen any of it.

MR. W. M'LAREN said, he had the Mayor's letter in his pocket, in which he stated that the Liberal Members of the Town Council and the locality disliked the clause exceedingly.

MR. DIAMOND said, he appealed from Philip drunk to Philip sober, he appealed from the statement of the Mayor contained in his letter to his evidence given on oath, he thought, before the Committee upstairs. He thought that the close inquiry that he had shown was made by the Committee absolved those Members who, unlike the hon. Member who spoke last, were present, and who he might claim felt as strongly on the subject as the hon. Member—absolved them from any charge of carelessness. It was only because the remarks of the hon. Member seemed to convey a reflection on the Members of the Committee that he had asked leave to say a few words on this question.

MR. W. M'LAREN: I wish to apologise for an error. I find the letter to which I referred was written by an ex-Mayor.

MR. DIAMOND said, he should vote for the Bill on the grounds of Home Rule. He did not profess to know as accurately as the people of Cambridge knew their own local needs and requirements; and when he remembered that the Bill abolished the Spinning House, that it did away with the Vice Chancellor's Court, that it was recognised on all sides to be a great improvement on the present state of affairs, he did not see how he could well vote against it. He regretted the discussion seemed to have partaken of, or to have even made to wear, the complexion of a Party discussion. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] There had been remarks made that would convey that idea. He thought there would be those found on both sides of the House who would agree that the local view ought to be considered in a matter of this kind. While he had the greatest respect for the 900 ladies and the method by which they expressed those opinions, he also had a great respect for the local women of Cambridge, and surely their vote, given in opposition to the votes of the 900 ladies, ought not to be lightly passed over. As a Member of the Committee it was his intention to support what was done upstairs.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough), who spoke amidst continued cries of "Divide!" said, he should not have thought it necessary to detain the House but for the speech they had just listened to. He was astonished to hear such a speech from an Irish Member, the Irish Party having always objected to exceptional laws against themselves; and now the Irish Representatives were going to treat the people of Cambridge in the way they themselves objected to be treated. For his part, he desired to see the people of Cambridge treated in the same way as the people of every other county in the United Kingdom. The people of Edinburgh, Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Aberdeen had no such exceptional laws, and the men there were as highly moral —more so, he thought—as the people of Oxford and Cambridge. He objected to the insinuation that these young men sent to Oxford and Cambridge wanted protection on account of their tendency to immorality above all other men of the United Kingdom; he objected to that, and trusted the House would not be carried away, but would vote for the liberty of the subject.

Mr. **Maclure** (Lancashire, S.E., Stretford): I beg to move, Sir, "That the Question be now put."

*Mr. **SPEAKER**: The Question is, "That Clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

The House divided:—Ayes 242; Noes 157.—(Division List, No. 39.)

*Mr. **H. L. W. LAWSON** (Gloucester, Cirencester) said, the point he wished to raise by way of Amendment to Clause 19 was very simple, but he did not think it was unimportant. The proposal in this clause gave power to erect baths and washhouses on common land. It was a matter of public policy not to allow any Public Authority to take common land for this purpose, and he reminded the House that the Board of Agriculture made a protest against it, which the Committee had been unable to comply with. It was undesirable that any part of these commons in the borough should be enclosed, and he therefore suggested that this provision should be struck out unless it was proved that it was absolutely necessary. [An hon. Member: It is necessary.] Yes, but there did not seem to have been any extensive evidence taken on this point; and yet the Committee was satisfied the place was suitable for that purpose. He submitted the Corporation of Cambridge should act under the Public Health Act and obtain the land in the ordinary way and not take common land, which ought to be used for purposes of recreation and open spaces. He did not wish to weary the House, but put the point that this was a matter of principle that common land should not be used for purposes such as this.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 6, to leave out Sub-section (d) (Erect baths, wash-houses, and lavatories.)—(*Mr. H. L. W. Lawson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Sir **W. HARCOURT**: We have already wasted a good deal of time, and though an important Bill in itself there is still more important business which the House has agreed should be concluded to-day; and under those circumstances, unless we have some assurance that this matter will be disposed of in five minutes, I will move the adjournment. I beg to move that the Debate be adjourned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

[House cleared for a Division, but on the Question being again put the adjournment of the Debate was not persisted in.]

Mr. **W. LONG** said, the Committee had inquired very closely into the proposal with reference to the commons. They found that the land proposed to be taken was not practically available for other purposes now, but was suitable for the erection of bathing places for the poorer people of the town of Cambridge. Further than that, it was only proposed to deal with two small spots and no injury would be done to the commons. The proposal had the support and sympathy of everyone in Cambridge.

*Sir **C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, he understood that the proposal was to erect bathing sheds, but the words seemed to be much too wide to cover that purpose.

Mr. **W. LONG** explained that it was thought that it might be necessary subsequently to erect certain covered buildings for washing purposes.

Amendment negatived.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time.

## *QUESTIONS.*

### CONFEY GRAVEYARD.

MR. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the ancient graveyard of Confey, near Leixlip, Union of Celbridge, is at present entirely uncared for, and that, owing to the absence of any proper walk, and the presence of bushwood and weeds, the interment of the dead is rendered a matter of much difficulty; and whether he will cause the Local Government Board to direct the Local Burial Board to put the graveyard in decent repair, and appoint a caretaker for its proper management, according to the existing Rules and Regulations of the Local Government Board with regard to burial grounds in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Local Government Board inform me that no complaints have been made to them with regard to the condition of the graveyard referred to. They learn, however, from the clerk of the Union that some repairs are necessary in the walls surrounding the cemetery, but that its present state is not such as to render interments more difficult than hitherto. The Guardians have appointed a caretaker for the ground, and have now under consideration the question of the propriety of taking steps to improve and enlarge the cemetery.

### CROFTER COMMISSION APPEALS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state when the appeal of John Mackenzie, Plock of Kyle, Lochalsh, Ross-shire, against the decision of the Crofters' Commission in December, 1891, will be heard; is he aware that, in consequence of the delay, there is a danger of Mackenzie being evicted from his holding, and that the county rate collector has threatened proceedings for non-payment of rates assessed upon the old rent; whether the rates should be assessed upon the rent fixed by the Crofters' Commission; and whether proceedings will be stayed until the decision of the Appeal Court has been given?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Crofters' Commission that the appeal mentioned will be heard as soon after the end of this month as is practicable. John Mackenzie's rent was reduced by the Commission from £8 to £4, and his arrears of £38 8s. 6d. cancelled down to £12, that sum being made payable in three instalments of £4 each. As Mackenzie has challenged the decision of the Commission by lodging an appeal, the county rate collector is entitled to assess upon the old rent; but if Mackenzie disputes this he can consign the amount without prejudice to his appeal. I have ascertained that the landlord has taken no proceedings to remove Mackenzie.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state when the appeals against the decisions of the Crofters' Commission in the Lochalsh district of Ross-shire will be heard?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I am informed by the Crofters' Commission that the appeals from the quarter mentioned will be heard as soon after the end of this month as is practicable.

### HARBOUR WORKS AT PORTNESS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, during the approaching summer, efforts will be made to secure the completion of the harbour works at Portness, Island of Lewis?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I can answer the hon. Member that every effort has been, and will be, made during the present summer to put forward the harbour works at Portness.

### THE COMMISSION ON IMPERIAL FINANCE.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Waterford, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can now state the names of the members of the Commission to inquire into the Financial Relations of Great Britain and Ireland?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am glad to say that a complete list of the eight names of the gentlemen who have been invited to serve on the Commission has now been framed, and in the course of a few days, after the names have been submitted to Her Majesty, I shall be able to announce their names to the House.

### IMPRISONMENT OF A BOMBAY MISSIONARY.

**Mr. S. SMITH** (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Rev. A. W. Prauteh, a young missionary in Bombay, has been sent to prison for a month for denouncing the conduct of the Government in professing to close the licensed opium dens, and allowing the opening of unlicensed places of a precisely similar character all over their jurisdiction, although they have the power given them by the Opium Act of 1878 to frame rules to close them; and whether the Government will take steps for his immediate release?

**The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA** (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The Bombay newspapers report part of a case in which the Rev. Mr. Prauteh, with others, was charged with "defamation" by one Damajee Lakmichund, a licensed opium vendor; but they do not give the result of the trial. I have telegraphed to the Government of Bombay for information as to this case, and if my hon. Friend will repeat his question I will give him the result of my inquiry.

### BOMBAY MIDNIGHT MISSION.

**Mr. S. SMITH**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a Memorial which a number of women of ill-fame have sent to the Governor of the Bombay Presidency with reference to the work of the Bombay Midnight Mission; and is he aware that on the following Wednesday to the presentation of the Memorial the Commissioners of Police had the whole of the Midnight Mission turned out of the street in which these women resided; and whether the police were justified in so doing?

**Mr. H. H. FOWLER**: My attention has been called to the publication in a Bombay newspaper of such a Memorial as is described in my hon. Friend's question. I have telegraphed for information as to the action of the police in the matter.

*Mr. J. Morley*

### HOURS OF LABOUR AT WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the engine-drivers, stokers, and oilers engaged in the Woolwich Arsenal are compelled to be at their posts for 60 hours a week; whether under the new arrangement of hours their time should be 53 hours—namely, 48 hours' work and five meal hours; and whether on night shift in all other branches of work in the factory men are paid a bonus of three hours per night or 15 hours per week, as under the 54 hours system, whereas the engine-drivers, stokers, and oilers are paid a bonus of only 10 hours?

**The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE** (Mr. Woodall, Hanley) (who replied) said): Engine-drivers, stokers, and oilers are required to be present during all meal hours and to give such extra time beyond the ordinary factory hours as the nature of their duties requires; but their time for work will have been sensibly reduced by the factories only being open for a less number of hours. They are on consolidated rates of pay, which cover meal-times and time for cleaning and oiling the machinery. The usual bonus of three hours per night is paid to the men on night-shift, except in the Royal Gun Factory, where a fixed nightly rate is in use.

**Mr. MACDONALD**: Is this a new arrangement which did not prevail before the eight hours system was introduced into the Arsenal?

**Mr. WOODALL**: I am not quite sure; I imagine not.

### CANTEEN SERGEANTS' PAY.

**Mr. HANBURY** (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a sergeant becoming canteen sergeant only receives private's pay; on what principle this reduction of pay is made; and what are the inducements or the compensation to balance this loss of pay?

*__The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR__ (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling, &c.): The canteen sergeant is an additional sergeant to those required for military purposes specially granted to take charge of the canteen. He is only paid from Army Estimates the pay and allowances of a private; but this is supplemented from the profits of the canteen. The arrangement was made to avoid the employment of a duty sergeant. The inducement to the man is pay at from 2s. 6d. to 5s. a day from the canteen fund, without sacrificing his claim to count his service towards sergeant's pension on discharge.

## MEAT IN MILITARY HOSPITALS.

**Mr. HANBURY**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he has received any recent Reports of the quality of meat supplied to the large military hospitals, especially Netley, and what is the purport of these Reports; and whether any arrangements are being made to enable Army medical officers to attend the meat inspection classes in Edinburgh?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: No special Reports have been called for on meat alone; but an Inspector, who was recently sent round to several hospitals, including Netley, reported that in some cases the articles generally supplied by contractors were not quite up to the specification. Steps were at once taken to remedy this state of things. A class of medical officers will attend the next course in meat-judging.

**Mr. JEFFREYS** (Hants, Basingstoke): Was it foreign meat?

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: I have not heard that it was.

**Mr. HANBURY**: Does the rule as to two-thirds of foreign meat apply to hospitals as well as elsewhere?

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: I am not sure.

## SOLDIERS' BEDDING.

**Mr. HANBURY**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War in how many barracks adequate washing accommodation for the private soldier exists, including the use of warm water once a day in winter; whether he is only allowed clean sheets once a month, and clean blankets once a year, and how this system compares with that in workhouses; and whether the rooms in which they sleep are usually also the eating rooms, or in how many barracks separate dining rooms exist?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: In all barracks there is washing accommodation for the private soldier, but hot water is not supplied at the public expense to ablution and bath rooms, except in those barracks where recruits are received. There hot baths are provided as required. In the new barracks, however, at Aldershot flues have been let into the walls of the kitchens, and baths are supplied by regimental arrangements. The soldiers' sheets are washed monthly, though he gets one clean sheet each fortnight, and his blankets yearly. Each soldier gets, however, a clean pair of sheets, and never succeeds to those of another man. The same practice seems to prevail in gaols and in Metropolitan police stations. I have no information as to workhouses. In the great majority of barracks the sleeping rooms are also the eating rooms; but day rooms are being tried at Dublin in the reconstructed barracks and in those provided by the conversion of the Woking prisons. At these places the additional rooms have been provided without much extra cost. The advantage of separate day rooms is recognised; but, in view of more pressing requirements, money is not likely to be available for their adoption generally. It must be remembered, however, that spacious reading rooms and recreation rooms are now provided which serve the purpose of day rooms.

**Colonel LOCKWOOD**: Will the right hon. Gentleman give orders, in the interests of cleanliness and decency, for the issue of more clean linen? I cannot understand the comparison of soldiers with inhabitants of gaols and workhouses.

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: Does the hon. and gallant Member impute that I thought soldiers should not be treated better than the inhabitants of gaols or workhouses?

**Colonel LOCKWOOD**: I do not impute anything of the sort. I simply say no such comparison should be drawn.

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: So far as I have been able to consult soldiers well acquainted with these matters, I find that they are generally disposed to think that the present arrangements are sufficient and satisfactory. It must be remembered that any material alteration in the supply of linen and blankets to soldiers would cost a great deal of money. For instance, I have ascertained by a rough calculation that to provide soldiers with a pair of clean sheets fortnightly instead of monthly would involve an additional expenditure of £10,000 per annum. While I quite admit that there may be an advantage in such an alteration being made, I am not quite sure that £10,000 a year may not be better spent on other matters which would better conduce to the advantage and comfort of the soldier.

MR. HANBURY: I have received complaints on the subject from medical officers, and, as I do not regard the right hon. Gentleman's answer as satisfactory, I beg to give notice that I shall call attention to the subject on the Army Vote.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I should be glad if the hon. Gentleman will give me the information he has received from the medical officers, because my own information is in exactly a different direction.

### CLARA AND BANAGHER RAILWAY.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if his attention has been called to the possible early closing of the Clara and Banagher Railway, owing to the refusal of the Great Southern and Western Railway to renew the agreement for working the line, which has been in operation during the last 10 years; if the proposal by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company to purchase the line and amalgamate it with their system has been brought to his notice, and the difficulty which has arisen with the Board of Works in consequence of a sum of £30,000 advanced to complete the line under the powers of the Relief of Distress (Ireland) Amendment Act of 1880; if he is aware that the closing of this line will inflict so serious a blow upon the industry of the surrounding district as may leave the district unable to meet the barony guarantee; and whether he can see his way to take any steps in the matter?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The proposal by the Great Southern and Western Railway to purchase the Clara and Banagher line has been brought under the notice of the Treasury. The Board of Works, as mortgagees, are necessary parties to any transaction having for its object the disposal of the line; but nothing has arisen, or is likely to arise, in connection with the advance referred to in the question of a nature to place a difficulty in the way of a sale to the Great Southern Railway Company.

### ARREARS OF POORS RATE IN IRELAND.

MR. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what are the grounds of the objection of the Local Government Board to the publication of the lists of ratepayers in arrear with their rates by Boards of Guardians in Ireland; and whether, as large defalcations by rate collectors have taken place in various Unions in Ireland, notably in the case of a collector named Daly, in Athlone Union, and of a collector named Finn, in Boyle Union, and as these large defalcations would have been impossible if the lists of people returned as in arrear by these collectors had been circulated from time to time amongst the ratepayers, he will authorise the Local Government Board to permit Boards of Guardians to issue these lists whenever they consider it advisable and necessary?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board have been advised that it is no part of the duty of Boards of Guardians to publish lists of persons in arrear with their rates, and that the expense of printing and posting such lists could not be regarded as a legal charge on the rates. The Board have also been advised that as the posting of these lists is not part of the duty of the Guardians they would not be in any way privileged in doing so, and if, by mistake, the name of a person not in default were included in the list the Guardians would be exposed to an action for damages. No doubt instances occur of default on the part of rate collectors. In the cases referred to in the question a collector was dismissed in Boyle Union in 1885, and a collector in Athlone last year for this cause, and possibly if lists of persons owing rates were published it would render detection more easy. The Local Government Board consider, however, that if a collector's books are properly and regularly checked by the clerk of the Union fewer cases of embezzlement of rates would occur, and if in every case of default the Guardians insisted upon the sureties making good the amount it would result in greater care being exercised in inquiring into the character of persons appointed to the responsible position of collector. As it is, large sums, I understand, are lost to the rates by the failure of the Guardians to see that a collector's sureties are solvent, and, when they are able to meet their liabilities, taking prompt steps to make them do so.

### FLESK MILLS, KILLARNEY.

**MR. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Fishery Inspectors has been directed to the action of the proprietors of the Flesk Mills, on the River Flesk, near Killarney, in working the mills night and day, on every day of the week, including Sunday, the power being used during the day for grinding purposes and at night for working the dynamos for the Killarney Lighting Company; whether such a continuous working of the mills by water power is contrary to the weekly close season law, which expressly provides that the water sluices supplying the mills shall be closed for 24 hours consecutively every week, and consequently the mills stop working; whether, considering that the fishing is one of the main sources of revenue in the district, any steps will be taken to prevent this systematic breach of the law; whether the Fishery Inspectors' attention has been drawn to the fact that there is no "Queen's gap," or "Fish pass," in the dam constructed across the River Flesk by the owners of the mills, the absence of which prevents the spawning fish reaching the upper waters; and if any steps will be taken to compel the proprietors to provide such a gap?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The attention of the Inspectors of Fisheries has been drawn to the working of the Flesk Mills near Killarney day and night the week through, including Sundays. It is required by law that the sluices shall be closed for 24 consecutive hours during each week to force the water through any existing gap, and through the waste gate if no gap exists. In the case of the Flesk Mills there is no such gap. The section, however, also provides that by the opening of the waste gate the mill must not be deprived of the necessary supply of water for its full and efficient working. In the present case the opening of the waste gate would deprive the mills of the water power; and, in these circumstances, the Inspectors do not recommend any steps to be taken. The weir at the mills is not a "fishing" weir; and, therefore, no question of "Queen's" gap arises. Having been constructed before the year 1842, no obligation exists in the owner to construct a fish pass at his own expense. The millowner intends to erect a wooden structure, which, it is hoped, will have the effect of facilitating the ascent of fish.

**MR. T. M. HEALY**: But was not the mill contemplated by the Act a corn mill or a mill for spinning purposes? Surely it was never contemplated it should be used for grinding electricity on Sunday. The Statute must have contemplated mills for some mercantile purpose.

**MR. J. MORLEY**: Yes, I should think that must have been so.

### DISCHARGED LABOURERS FROM KINGSTOWN PIER.

**MR. T. M. HEALY**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a number of old servants of the Board of Works of from 15 to 30 years' service, at wages of 12s. to 15s. per week, were recently discharged at Kingstown, and are left with no means of subsistence; are other Government labourers at Kingstown Pier working 58 hours per week paid from 9s. to 14s.; and will he inquire into the question of the discharge and remuneration of these men?

**SIR J. T. HIBBERT**: I understand that there was no alternative but to discharge 12 Kingstown labourers in February last, because they were no longer able to perform their duties. In the cases of eight of these labourers the Treasury have awarded gratuities. The service of the remaining four does not bring them within the statutory powers under which gratuities can be given. The wages of men employed as labourers at Kingstown Pier vary from 12s. to 15s., not from 9s. to 14s. It is only in the case of boys that wages at the rate of 9s. are paid. The working hours per week at the harbour are 57 in summer and 54 in winter.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: As these men, I am told, are in a state of great destitution after working for a long time for the Government, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the possibility of granting some gratuity ?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT** was understood to say that there were no funds available for the purpose.

### CROFTERS' COMMISSION APPEALS.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, in consequence of the illness of Sheriff Brand, great inconvenience has been occasioned through the inability of the Crofters' Commission to take up consideration of cases requiring the attendance of three Commissioners as a Court of Appeal; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of strengthening the Commission by the addition of one or more members ?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Sheriff Brand informs me that he greatly regrets the inconvenience occasioned by his detention at home from an affection of the knee, but is now very much better, and entertains the confident hope of being able to resume duty outside by the 21st of this month. He has all along been giving careful attention to such duties of the Crofters' Commission as could be discharged by means of written communications and correspondence. In these circumstances, it is unnecessary to consider the suggestion conveyed at the close of the question.

**Mr. WEIR**: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are now some 1,600 appeals awaiting trial ?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Yes, I am aware of it.

### THE KILLARNEY GUARDIANS.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, by the issue of a sealed Order, the Local Government Board have impounded the rates due to the Killarney Board of Guardians; whether this course has been taken on account of the non-payment of the seed potatoes loan, amounting to £2,035 15s. 8d.; and if he can state whether this action on the part of the Local Government Board prevents the payment of any other of the liabilities incurred by the Board of Guardians ?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The facts are as stated in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the question. The Board of Works having certified that the amount was payable to them by the Guardians, it was obligatory on the Local Government Board, under Section 4 of the Seed Potatoes Supply (Ireland) Act, 1890, to issue the Impounding Order. The treasurer of the Union is bound, on receipt of the Impounding Order, to pay the amount mentioned therein to the Board of Works out of any money then in his hands to the credit of the Guardians, or, if such money is insufficient, out of all money subsequently received by him on account of the Guardians. The Local Government Board, however, have asked the treasurer to retain enough money in his hands to pay outdoor relief cheques.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL**: In a previous answer the right hon. Gentleman admitted that cheques amounting to £2,000 had been issued and dishonoured. Now that the whole rates are impounded, how is the work to be carried on by this bankrupt Union ?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I suppose some arrangement is made for that.

**Mr. SEXTON**: Is it imperative under the law to impound the whole rates in order to secure the payment of arrears, or can discretion be exercised so as to extend the time in the interests of the ratepayers ?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I am told the Local Government Board have no alternative. I am not sure that the arrangement which has been made to keep in hand sufficient for outdoor relief is legal.

### SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE.

**Mr. DIAMOND** (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the requirements demanded by the Scotch Education Code from Standards IV. and V., he will give instructions that the additional arithmetical work imposed by the New Code shall not be enforced this year, seeing that a number of schools liable to early examinations would be placed at a serious disadvantage thereby ?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Instructions will be given that, until the end of the year, due consideration will be shown in view of the changes in the requirements as regards arithmetic.

### THE EVENING SCHOOL CODE.

Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education when the New Code relating to evening schools, which was presented on the 29th of March, became law; and when such New Code will be printed and circulated, so that those who are responsible for the management of evening schools may know the conditions required to be fulfilled by these schools in order to obtain the annual Parliamentary grant?

Mr. A. H. SMITH (Christchurch): At the same time, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman when the Evening School Code will be in the hands of Members; and whether any change will be made in the mode of payment of teachers in order to avoid the possible hardship of a teacher being engaged in tuition for as much as 23 hours and receiving payment for only 12 hours?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): In reply to this question, and to the one which stands further down on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Christchurch, I propose to lay the new Minute of the Committee of Council on Education, establishing the new Evening School Code, on the Table to-day, and it will be issued thereupon as soon as it can be printed. Members will thus have it in their hands before Whitsuntide, and will have full opportunity of discussing it after the House reassembles. This Minute will supersede the Code which was laid on the Table on the 29th of March, and will provide that, in future, the Evening School Code shall be presented to Parliament before the 1st of May in each year.

Mr. GRIFFITH - BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): Then the Code laid on the Table on the 29th of March has not become law?

Mr. ACLAND: Yes, so far as it is a reproduction of the old Code.

### DISPENSARY COMMITTEES.

Mr. HAYDEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether persons are qualified to be members of a Dispensary Committee who do not reside in the Dispensary District; and whether he will have the law on this point carried into force, as much inconvenience is caused to the poor where it is not observed?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Under Section 7 of the Medical Charities (Ireland) Act, 1851, Dispensary Committees in Ireland are composed of the *ex officio* and elected Guardians of the Poor who are resident, or owners, or occupiers of property in the district, together with a number of ratepayers resident in the district and rated for property therein. It is not, therefore, necessary for Guardians, *ex officio* and elected, to reside in the district for which they are members of committees provided they either own, or are in occupation of, property therein. With respect to the second part of the question, the Local Government Board inform me that they are not aware of any instance in which the provisions of the law referred to have not been complied with.

### THE NORTH SEA FISHERIES.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is in a position to give any further information with regard to the North Sea Fisheries Convention; and what steps are being taken to carry out the North Sea Fisheries Act of last year?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Mundella, Sheffield, Brightside): The Convention of 1887 for dealing with the liquor traffic amongst fishermen in the North Sea, as modified by the relative Protocol of last year, was ratified on the 11th of last month. The Protocol provides that the Convention shall come into force six weeks after ratification; and notice has accordingly been given in pursuance of Section 10 of the North Sea Fisheries Act, 1893, the Act for giving effect to the Convention on the part of this country, that the Act will come into force on the 23rd instant. The requisite executive steps are being taken, with the co-operation of the Admiralty, for ensuring the enforcement of the Act.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, then, if it is a fact that after the 23rd of May English vessels in the North Sea will be liable to be stopped and, if he deems it necessary, taken into port by a subordinate officer in the Belgian or in any other Navy ?

MR. MUNDELLA: Any vessel contravening International Regulations will be liable to be dealt with under the Act.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: My question is: Has a subordinate officer of any Navy power to stop and seize any English vessel ?

MR. MUNDELLA: Subject to Regulations made by the Admiralty.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Are the Regulations part of the Convention ?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes, they are.

### GERMAN PRISON-MADE GOODS.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if, now that he has been placed in possession of the name and address of the foreign agent in London who supplies brushes throughout England, made in a German prison, at a price per dozen below that of the mere labour alone at Trade Union rates in English-made brushes, he will take steps to restrain by law the competition from abroad of forced prison labour, which has been abandoned at home as unfair to those in this country who live by the productions of their industry ?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have had no notice of this question till I saw it on the Paper this morning. After I left the Board of Trade yesterday the hon. Gentleman sent a brush with the address of the agent who is said to supply them, but no particulars were furnished as to prices of sale or manufacture. With the aid of the Foreign Office the Board of Trade are inquiring into the matter.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I have here for the information of hon. Members the card of the agent in England of the German convict prisons, and also a specimen of the prison-made goods he is selling in England.

MR. MUNDELLA: I have no knowledge of this.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I brought it to the right hon. Gentleman's notice.

MR. MUNDELLA: The hon. and gallant Member did not intimate to me that he was going to put a question.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: The right hon. Gentleman has not said whether the Government is prepared to take steps to exclude the importation of these goods.

MR. MUNDELLA: We have no means of taking steps to exclude anything.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to give notice that on Wednesday next I shall ask leave to introduce a Bill to prevent the importation into this country of goods manufactured or produced wholly or in part by foreign prison labour.

MR. MUNDELLA: It will interest the House to know that an agitation is going on in Germany against the competition of prison labour, and the German Government have ordered a full inquiry into the whole matter. We await with interest the result of that inquiry.

### HOURS OF LABOUR IN GOVERNMENT DOCKYARDS.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he can now state when the principle of the eight hours day will be practically applied in the Government Dockyards; and when the scheme by which it is intended to apply it will be published ?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): The scheme applying the eight hours day to the dockyards has practically been approved by the Board of Admiralty, but certain details remain to be settled. As soon as this has been done the scheme will be promulgated.

### COMPRESSED FODDER CONTRACTS.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the War Department have ordered from Chicago dealers 500 tons of compressed fodder ?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I have made inquiry, and can find no ground for this report.

### LECTURE THEATRE OF THE ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY.

MR. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the cause of the delay in commencing the works for the construction of the new lecture theatre of the Royal Dublin Society in Dublin, to which the Society has subscribed £5,000; will he explain why, although plans were approved of in November, 1892, tenders were not invited by the Board of Works until December, 1893; if he is aware that tenders were sent in last January, and that no apparent action has been taken with reference to them since that time; and if he will take steps with a view to having the works at once commenced, and the contract with the Society, on the faith of which they subscribed the £5,000, carried out?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The plans approved of in November, 1892, were only preliminary or sketch plans, without any details agreed upon between the Royal Dublin Society and the Board of Works, and the delay since the revised plans were ready (in April, 1893) has been due chiefly to the fact that the estimate of cost largely exceeded the sum authorised by the Treasury, and it was therefore necessary to make arrangements for the purpose of avoiding such excess. It has been within the knowledge of the Society ever since January that the Board of Works have been in communication with the architects and the surveyor with that object. The contract for the theatre is now ready for signature, and is only delayed by a demand by the Society for the inclusion in the scheme of two rooms having no connection with the purposes of a theatre. The Board of Works have informed the Society of the impossibility of proceeding with the work on the understanding that these rooms are to be provided, and as soon as the Society assent to their omission the contract will be signed and the work begun forthwith.

### THE ESTATE DUTY IN IRELAND.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in determining the rate of Estate Duty to be paid by tenant purchasers in Ireland under the Land Purchase Acts, the value of tenant-right and the tenant's interest in the holding, together with his stock and other property, will be added to the interest acquired by the purchase of the landlord's interest under the said Acts?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): The Estate Duty will be charged on the value of the holdings, including all the incidents which go to constitute such value, together with the stock and other property of the tenant.

MR. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman now say whether, in the case of a holding on which only a part of the capital money has been repaid, the duty will be leviable on the whole sum?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to put the question on the Paper.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Surely the right hon. Gentleman can say whether the principal value does not include the whole value of the estate?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No, I cannot.

### CROFTER LEGISLATION.

MR. WEIR: I wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is now prepared to name a day when effect will be given to the repeated pledges of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, the Secretary for Scotland, and the Lord Advocate, by introducing a Bill to extend the Crofters Act, 1886, to small tenants?

SIR W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; I cannot name a day.

### LAW OFFICERS' FEES.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.): May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will be able to inform the House of the new arrangement as to fees with the Law Officers of the Crown?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Certainly; before the Vote comes on for discussion.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### PERIOD OF QUALIFICATION AND ELECTIONS BILL.—(No. 161.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [1st May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"this House declines to proceed further with a Bill containing provisions effecting extensive changes in the representative system of the country, in the absence of proposals for the redress of the large inequalities existing in the distribution of electoral power."—(*Sir E. Clarke.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I have, in the first place, to express my grateful recognition of the courtesy of the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby, who has refrained from exercising his right to continue the Debate. I am always very sorry to interfere with any hon. Member of the House, and I am especially so in the case of my right hon. Friend, who has made a special study of this subject. But, Sir, I understand the Government desire that this Debate should be brought to a close this evening, and further, very naturally and properly, they wish to have, at all events, a fair opportunity of replying upon the whole Debate, and as the previous discussion of a Private Bill has taken so much time I ventured to think it might be desirable I should rise at once. I regret very much that other circumstances over which I had not absolute control prevented me from being present yesterday to listen to the most admirable speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bury. Sir, I do not think that anyone, whether they agree with that speech or not, will contest its ability or will hesitate to say it was a most eloquent and most exhaustive indictment of the whole policy of the Government as contained in this Bill. I read it to-day, and I must say it appears to me, and I think it must have appeared to the House at the time, that the reply of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India was a most inadequate answer. I am not in the least detracting from the eloquence or the ability of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India, but I am certain that ability was chiefly shown on the occasion of this Debate yesterday in the skill with which he managed to avoid all the main issues in conflict. My right hon. Friend began with a vehement declamation in which he accused the right hon. Member for Bury of gross inconsistency. Sir, that is the staple argument of the supporters of the Ministry and of the Members of the Ministry—a staple argument with gentlemen who, of course, must feel that they, at any rate, are free from the slightest suspicion or reproach in regard to this subject. As regards many of the arguments of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bury, the Secretary of State for India passed them over without any notice whatsoever. Anyone who will read the printed reports of the two speeches will find that, practically, questions one after another were submitted to the Government, and as to the majority of them the Government have taken no notice whatsoever; and even as regards those that they did notice I must say it appears to me the reply was altogether insufficient. Now, Sir, I feel that under these circumstances, in following my right hon. Friend, my chief duty is to repeat and to reinforce the arguments which he advanced. I hope that, although I cannot expect to put these arguments forward any better, if as well, as my right hon. Friend, at all events I can do it in a rather different way, and, perhaps, I may be more fortunate than he was, because the Secretary of State for India professed as one reason for not replying to my right hon. Friend that he could not understand his argument. At least I will endeavour to make myself intelligible. I should also say at the commencement that I approach the policy of the Government with, on the whole, more favourable feelings than may be entertained by some of my hon. Friends opposite. I have always admitted that the state of our Registration Law was a scandal and abuse, and it was the duty as well as the natural desire of every Government to amend this law, and I am prepared to do justice to the Government and to say they were quite right and would fail in their duty were they not to call the attention of the House to the subject. It may, however, be a little more questionable whether in calling the attention of the House to the undoubted defects in our Registration Law they were entitled for the first time, in such a case, to introduce, head and shoulders, a subject which has really no direct reference to the main object of the Bill, and whether they were justified, to use the words of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in cutting deeply into the franchise. And, Sir, I suppose that all Parties on both sides of the House will agree that no Government—I will not say this, but any, Government—would be justified in touching this subject at all, in dealing with great questions affecting our electoral system, if they were to approach it in a partisan spirit and solely with a view to Party interest and Party supremacy. The Secretary of State for India most indignantly repudiated any intention of the kind. He said that suggestions to that effect occurred in the speech of the Member for Bury, and he most indignantly repudiated them, and I think the Chief Secretary for Ireland in the course of the Debate declared they had no Party object. Very well, I accept the assurance of my right hon. Friend. I am not going to contest that in the course of this Debate, and I can only express my sympathy with them at their disappointment when, after having introduced a Bill of this kind in the most disinterested way and without any Party object, they found in the course of the Debate that they had been entirely mistaken and that the Bill will do the very thing they do not want to do. Well, now, Sir, the Secretary of State for India said that what they proposed to do was to deal with pressing and admitted grievances, and that they had no ulterior object. He said they could not, they had not the time, and I suppose not the inclination, to deal with all the anomalies in our electoral system, and consequently they have been obliged to make a selection. A selection! Is it a natural selection? Is it a survival of the fittest? The process of selection in the case of a Government dealing with a highly technical and controversial subject is always, I think the Secretary of State for India will agree, an extremely delicate matter, and admitting that their object is to deal fairly with all Parties in this matter, I must say I cannot compliment them on their success. Imagine they had proceeded on a totally different supposition, and suppose the Government had said to themselves, "Here is a General Election coming and we are going to be beaten; let us shuffle the cards; let us arrange for a new pack, and under these circumstances we may possibly have some chance of victory, which at present we have not." Suppose they had said that, what would have been their course? They would have surveyed the whole of the electoral field, and they would have made a list of every anomaly and of everything which by any chance could be called a grievance affecting any Party or individual, and having made that list they would proceed to a process of selection, and they would have selected precisely those anomalies for redress which at the present time tell in favour of their opponents, and would have discarded altogether all those anomalies which happen to tell on the other side. That is clearly what they would do if they desired to bring forward a Party Bill. But, Sir, what is this Bill? That is precisely what this Bill does. I say it is admitted. The supporters of the Government—not, perhaps, in this House, but out of it, in the country—have been saying for themselves what the Government have done and will do by this Bill. The late Attorney General has been quoted, and no explanation has been given of his speech. He pointed out that by the changes which this Bill would involve constituencies which were now safe seats for the Conservative or Unionist Party would become safe seats for the Government. I am going frankly to accept the assurances given to us by my right hon. Friends, but it does appear to me they are the only people in this House and, I believe, in the country who do not know what the inevitable results would be of their own Bill. I am unwilling to bring any charge against the Government, or to say that this extraordinary coincidence is due to any deliberate action on their part, and, therefore, we have to find who it is who is responsible, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Bury yesterday pointed out the culprit. There is a French proverb which says if you want to know who is the criminal you must find out who will most profit by the crime. There is no doubt who will profit by this Bill. Only one section of the community, of course the Party of the Government, may at all events gain a temporary advantage through the provisions of the Bill. I am not speaking of political advantage. The direct pecuniary and personal advantage which is to be gained by this Bill will all go to political agents and wire-pullers, whether of the one Party or another. As to that there is no doubt whatever. This is not a Party question; this is not a matter of controversy, nor, I believe, is this a result which any Party in this House would really desire to bring about. I am not going to dwell, at this time especially, at any length upon the question of the enormous additional expense which this Bill will involve. The Secretary of State for India really treated the matter much too lightly. I think his reply was totally insufficient on the subject, and I think his figures were figures which no one practically acquainted with the working of our registration system in the different constituencies would justify for one moment. This matter has been, I think, proved to the satisfaction of the House. Authorities on this subject on both sides have concurred in the view that the effect of this Bill would be to throw an additional charge upon the rates of between £300,000 and £500,000. Now, that is rather a serious thing. Why should we take out of the pockets of the ratepayers a sum of between £300,000 and £500,000 in order to find subsistence for a number of officials already existing and a great number more who will be created as soon as this Bill passes both Houses of Parliament? But that is not the worst. I would be content if we got sufficient advantage to leave the rates to take care of themselves. But what about the candidates? Why are we to have imposed upon us for no public good whatsoever the enormous additional expense which will be involved by this Bill? And remember that expense will come upon us for two reasons, and to one of these sufficient importance has not been attached. The Secretary of State for India told us in a lucid moment, before he got up to support this Bill, that under a system of double registration you would have registration all the year round. Every person who comes forward for Parliamentary honours, if he wants to stand a fair chance against his opponent, will have to keep the preparations for and the work of registration going month after month and week after week throughout the whole 12 months. That in itself means an enormous expense. But then you have also the immensely increased necessity for an expert and professional supervision of registration which is involved in this Bill. You are making the Registration Law much more complicated than before, you are opening the door to bogus qualifications, you are making personation much more easy. You are doing all these things, and no man who can afford it will fail to protect himself against that possibility. He can only protect himself through persons who are skilled in that particular kind of work—dirty work I was almost going to say; but, at all events, they must be persons who are professionally qualified, and professional assistance, valuable as it is, is also very expensive. I say that is undoubtedly a proof, if any proof were wanted, that the real authors of this Bill are the leaders of the professional organisation, Mr. Schnadhorst and his acolytes, who see their advantage in a change which certainly will not be at all to the advantage of their employers or of the public. What the Government ought to have done was to have codified the Law of Registration. We want to have a simple and single law, and not to have to run through I do not know how many Acts of Parliament from early times down to the present. There are also a great number of conflicting decisions given by the Courts; those are all left untouched. Not one single thing is done which will take 1s. off the expense, but everything is done in order to increase the expense. I appeal to hon. Members who desire that poverty should not be a bar to representation in this House. I say you are doing all you can to prevent poor men from coming to this House. You talk about payment of Members. Even if you were to pay them upon a royal scale it would not be enough to pay the legitimate expenses of providing for registration in the case of a Bill of this kind. But I do not appeal on behalf of the poor men only; I appeal on behalf of the best men. I mean by that the men who have no personal objects to serve, who come here because they honestly desire to do public work and public service, and those are just the men, whether rich or poor, who resent the imposition upon their shoulders of an unnecessary and extortionate charge because they are willing to serve their country. You are doing a great injury to the character of this House and of the representation in the United Kingdom when you unnecessarily put upon the shoulders of candidates these very heavy charges. This matter, of course, is not a Party question, and I appeal to the Government, when we come into Committee, to leave it an open question. In that case, I undertake to say, we shall amend the Bill so that the new association of Party agents will not know their own offspring. Another non-contentious point is the question of official registration. Why on earth is that proposal dropped out of the present Bill? I believe the creation of an official registration system was really one of the main items of the programme of the Liberal Party before the split. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean gave an explanation of the provision in question which I should have thought rather ridiculous. He said the Government had dropped it because the Leader of the Opposition killed it. That is a great compliment to the Leader of the Opposition, and it is the first occasion on which such a compliment has been paid to any Member of the Opposition. But I did not understand that the argument of my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition killed the principle of the proposal. He pointed out, and very properly, the dangers of official registration if you were not very careful to secure your officials from political and Party influence; but if, by taking such precautions as are always taken in regard to every appointment which is in the nature of a judicial appointment, you can have a thoroughly impartial official system, then I think it would be very much to our advantage to adopt it. Certainly that is one of the things which will greatly lessen the expense of registration to candidates and enable them to dispense with what, after all, I think everybody desires as far as possible to dispense with — namely, purely professional agency. Then I come to the question of one polling day. That, again, cannot be a matter of principle; it is a matter rather of the general convenience of the constituencies. I do not pretend that to have the elections on one day would be more injurious to our Party than to the Party of the Government, but I do say it would be a most inconvenient arrangement. The Secretary of State for India said that it was perfectly easy to have one polling day because they have it in America. It is quite true that they have it in America for a certain election, but the circumstances of the Presidential Election are totally different to those of our General Election, and I venture to say that, whether it be convenient or not in America, it would be extremely inconvenient in this country. Why? Because if you are to have it on one day you must either shorten the time for the polling in counties or lengthen it for boroughs, or you must do both—as, indeed, the Bill does. The Government have shortened the time for counties and lengthened it for boroughs. To the former, although I should have thought it very difficult, considering the enormous extent of many county divisions, I should have no objection; but I do ask, in the name of my fellow Members for boroughs, why on earth a lengthened period is to be imposed upon us? Everybody knows that to lengthen the period means to increase the expense, and generally to increase the excitement, which is not always desirable. I submit, therefore, that here also we should be allowed absolute freedom to treat this as a non-controversial matter, and to vote according to the opinions and desires of our constituencies. Then comes another question—if you are to have one day, is that day to be Saturday? It is not a question of Party importance, but Saturday is the worst day you could possibly choose, and I cannot understand how anybody with the experience of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India could have allowed his name to be attached to a proposal of this kind. If he had taken the opinion of his Association in Wolverhampton he would have found they were entirely opposed to it. At all events, my own constituents, and I may say the whole population of Birmingham of both Parties, are entirely opposed to Saturday polling. And why? There are three reasons. In the first place, it affects the Jews. Now the Jews, although not a very numerous body, are, at all events, entitled to be considered. The Secretary of State for India spoke almost with indignation of any suggestion that the poll should be held in this country on Sunday. Well, the Jews may take the same objection to a poll on Saturday. Why should you put this great and unnecessary inconvenience on a very considerable number of perfectly respectable voters and capable citizens? In the second place, it is extremely inconvenient for the small shopkeepers in the towns. Saturday is the busiest day of the week in all our large towns. The working classes make their purchases on that day, and the effect of having the polling on a Saturday would be to disfranchise a very large number of most respectable people—that is to say, the shopkeepers who supply the artizan classes. But I am not by any means certain that the artizan classes themselves would like it, because more and more it is becoming their habit to make a holiday of Saturday. They clear up their work on Saturday morning, and in the afternoon they go into the country—many of them on bicycles—especially in summer, in very large numbers, and do not return till late in the evening, and then they have got to make their purchases. Therefore, the proposal to make polling universal on Saturday would be, I believe, to disfranchise a very considerable number of persons. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I will not put it in that way if hon. Members jeer at it. I will say I am certain. I am endeavouring to discuss this matter with all fairness and with absolute impartiality, and I confess I think this kind of interruption, the tone of the interruption, is extremely discourteous. There is one other point in regard to a Saturday polling day, and that applies to the counties, where, I think, it will be found that a very great number of markets are held upon Saturday; and, if that is so, the inconvenience in the county constituencies might be just as great as the inconvenience in the boroughs. I think this is a question which ought to receive very much more consideration than I think the Government have given to it up to the present time. Now I pass on to the qualifying period. That has been treated in a more contentious spirit by some hon. Members than I am prepared to treat it myself on the present occasion. What are the facts? As I understand the statement of the Chief Secretary and of other hon. Members, the qualifying period—that is to say, the period after which a man can get his vote—is at the present time 18 months as a minimum and two and a quarter years as a maximum. We are all agreed that that is too long. By the Bill of 1893 this would have been reduced to nine months as a minimum and 21 months as a maximum. Under the present Bill it is nine months as a minimum and 15 months as a maximum. If we substituted a six months residence qualification, it would then be 12 months as a minimum and 18 months as a maximum. I prefer six months, and I do so because I think we are all agreed that a substantial period of residence, giving a man a local interest and local responsibilities, is really a good qualification, and even a fair condition to be imposed on the exercise of the franchise. But, at the same time, if I could accept the figures as I have just given them as regards the minimum term, it really does not matter very much in the case of a *bonâ fide* qualification whether the man's residence is nine months or 12 months. I should be disposed to say 12 months, but still I should be willing to admit that nine months would be a sufficient period. But I want to point out to my right hon. Friends that, although it is perfectly true that that is the minimum period in the case of what I have called the *bonâ fide* qualification—in the case of the man who takes up his qualification in a constituency intending to reside in the constituency—it is totally different in the case of the bogus qualification; and I want to ask the Chief Secretary whether the Government have considered this point? What is to prevent, say, a large manufacturer or a large contractor who has very strong political opinions from introducing into a borough or a county in which there is a very small Party majority 20, 30, or 50 men, paying their rent for three months, and giving them, therefore, a residential qualification, and immediately afterwards taking them out of the constituency into a neighbouring one, or into a distant one if you like, and only bringing them back when they are wanted to vote. What would be the effect of that? The cost to that contractor, supposing he paid it out of his own pocket, would not be more than £100. You could put 50 men into Birmingham for three months for £100. Having moved them in for three months there is no necessity for keeping them there, because, having got upon the Register, their vote is a good one until the next registration. Of course, that is an operation which will only be performed when there is reason to expect an election very shortly. Take a time like the present. I think most people will suppose that an election is coming before the next 15 months. [An hon. MEMBER: "No, no!"] I did not say the hon. Member, I said most people; and most people hope for it, though probably not the hon. Member. In such a case it would be worth while for this operation to be performed, and I believe there is no doubt whatever that in this way it would be perfectly possible for a man to vote at an election for six months after he had received his qualification, and although he had only resided in the place three months and those three months 12 months before the election took place. In these circumstances, just consider what a temptation there is to carry out this very dubious operation. Consider what an opportunity it gives for manipulation of every kind, and consider also how much more easy it will make individual personation. It is difficult enough to detect personation now; it will be almost impossible to detect personation if the people who are voting are persons who are not known to their neighbours, and who have already at the time they vote disappeared for some period from the constituency. I hope the Government may be willing to give the matter further consideration, and, if I am right, I think we should be justified in asking that, at all events, a *bonâ fide* residence of six months should qualify a man for the exercise of the franchise. There is another question which must be treated as a controversial matter, and that is the question of the position of lodgers. The position of lodgers is most anomalous, and nobody doubts that lodgers have a grievance. A great deal was expected from the lodger franchise, and it has not fulfilled the expectations of its authors. Why not? Not because there are not plenty of lodgers who are well qualified to take their place with the electorate of the country, but because the Registration Laws put such difficulties in their way that they cannot get on the roll. That is precisely the case which the Bill in its main principle is intended to deal with. We have been told from the Government Bench its object is not to give the franchise, but to put those who are entitled to the franchise upon the Register. Then why not put the lodgers on? That that is a fair and honest demand to make is shown by this fact: that in the Bill introduced by the right hon. Member for Halifax this provision did appear, and that Bill was supported by the Liberal Party. It appeared in the Bill of 1893. Why is it not in the Bill of 1894? Is it because they have not time? Is it because they cannot deal with the whole subject? Why, then, did they introduce a lot of other things which were not in the Bill of 1893? Why did they drop precisely that thing which everybody knows is likely on the whole to benefit the Unionist Party, and why did they put in a whole number of new things which have not nearly so close a connection with the Bill, but which are certain to benefit the Party of the Government? One hon. Member the other day said this would enfranchise the sons of squires and of parsons and of farmers. [An hon. MEMBER: Who paid nothing.] That is absurd; if they paid nothing they would not get on. Well, suppose it does. Why not? Why should not the sons of squires, of parsons, and of farmers, if they are entitled to the vote, if they are qualified for the vote, if they are capable citizens, have the vote? I am only arguing against the hon. Member who has put forward this reason. I maintain that there are a great number of others besides these classes who ought to be put on as lodgers. Why should they not be enfranchised if they are entitled to be upon the Register? It is because, forsooth, their fathers pay for them. It is difficult to say whether they are in a position to pay for themselves. I can give an illustration. I have a son who gives me the pleasure of his company at my house. Is that any reason why he should be disfranchised? He is capable of being a Member of this House, and I should have thought he would be considered capable of voting for a Member of this House, and for the life of me I cannot find any reasonable or any impartial argument against the enfranchisement of the lodger class. Then I go on to consider a very important suggestion—namely, the abolition of the ratepaying condition. Again, I ask myself, why is that introduced, I think for the first time, by this Government? It is a very curious fact that the maintenance of the ratepaying condition was a Liberal principle, and actually, when a Conservative Government proposed to abolish it—at that time the majority of the freeholders were Liberals—Lord John Russell opposed the reform, and declared that it was contrary to the Liberal principle that taxation and representation should go together. Well, we have changed all that, and I am not certain whether that is a Liberal principle any longer. At all events, the answer of the Secretary of State for India was that the representation was national and the taxation was local, and that there was no more reason for making the payment of local taxation a condition than the payment of any other debt. I am surprised that with his great acuteness the right hon. Gentleman should not have seen the distinction. It is quite impossible to make national taxation the test of fitness, because the vast majority of the voters pay no direct national taxes. Local taxation is the only remaining test of a man's willingness to fulfil his civic obligations. Now, I want to appeal to my Radical friends. Is it really their pretension now that, without regard to fitness at all, every man is entitled to vote? Is manhood, without any condition of any kind, to be the one qualification?

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): Yes.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My hon. Friend says "Yes." My hon. Friend goes much further than Radicals have been accustomed to do, because even in democratic States where you have absolute manhood suffrage I do not believe there is one where there are not many conditions, conditions either of an educational character, or conditions which have relation to the fulfilment of State and civic duties. But let me ask my hon. Friend below me another question. Is he in favour of placing the pauper on the register, a man who at the present moment is absolutely subsisting on the bounty of the community, and of allowing him to vote in matters affecting the expenditure of the community? He does not answer.

Mr. STOREY: I do not want to be catechised. My right hon. Friend knows my views on that point, just as well as I know the views he used to hold.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have not catechised my hon. Friend; I only asked him a civil question. I should not have catechised him, as he says, if I had known his views, but I am absolutely ignorant of what his views are on the matter, and therefore I asked him. But as regards my own views, I may say that I have always held the views, absolutely so, that I am now putting before the House. In no speech of mine—and there are many hon. Members who are better acquainted with my speeches than I am myself—will you find anything which lends itself to the idea that a pauper ought to be on the Register. I take it that the majority of Radicals still hold the doctrine that a man ought not to be on the Register who is upon the rates. If that is held to be a fair condition for the exercise of the franchise, *à fortiori* I say you ought to put off the Register a man who is not only a pauper but a defaulter. The defaulter may not be a pauper, in a technical sense, but in another sense he is a great deal worse than a pauper. The pauper may be a man who has fallen into that position entirely through misfortune; but a defaulter is a man who is perfectly well able to meet his obligations, but deliberately chooses not to do so, and evades them. In our large towns there are numbers of people who make it a regular practice to flit to other districts just before the tax collector comes, in order to evade their just obligations. What you are doing in this Bill is to encourage that class. It will not hold water even from the extreme Radical position. Granting that we may be in favour of absolute manhood suffrage, still we are bound and justified by every Liberal principle in imposing such a condition as we think necessary in order to show that a man is a capable citizen. That brings me to another point in reference to this huckstering of the franchise. Great alterations were made in the franchise in 1884. What was our object then? What was the claim which justified our action? It was that we intended to bring within the portals of the Constitution 2,000,000 capable citizens, and I say that a man is not a capable citizen who goes from place to place, who has no fixed domicile, who has no legal responsibility, who shirks the first duty of a citizen, and who refuses to bear his proper share of civic obligations.

I do not believe this proposal of the Government will be popular, and in saying that I mean that it will not be popular even with their own Party. I do not believe it will be popular with the masses of the working people. One thing which made a great impression on my mind in the Commission on Old Age Pensions was to hear from the working men who came before us—one and all—the expression of their loathing for the wastrel, for the ne'er-do-well, the profligate, and the drunkard, the man who is a burden upon them and everybody else, and who never does his proper share of decent and honest work. Well, that is the class you are going especially to favour. That is the class for whose behoof you are going to abolish a condition which, for I do not know how many years, it was the principle of the Liberal Party to maintain. Sir, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India, in replying to the speech of the right hon. Member for Bury, said this was an unimportant matter, because in all large towns it would not arise under the compounding clauses. I agree with him that in England, and in those places in which compounding is practised, the matter is of much less importance; but what does he say with regard to Scotland, or even Sheffield? To Scotland the matter is of great importance. The proposal of the Government will materially alter the electoral position of such cities as Edinburgh and Glasgow, and it is quite possible—I do not say it is absolutely certain—that in those cities the votes of industrious artizans will be swamped by the votes of those whom we may almost call professional defaulters. Sir, there is one other provision in the Bill with which I should like to deal. With regard to plural voting, that has been brought neck and crop into this Bill, with which it has no legitimate connection whatever. I maintain that in pretending to cure this anomaly the Government are creating another anomaly, which I think will be even greater. If you are going to deal with this plural vote, why not do so in a thorough and satisfactory manner? Why do you leave the bye-elections? Have you considered what extraordinary confusion you will produce? Here is a man who is allowed to hold his votes in a number of constituencies. He may vote in a bye-election in any one of these constituencies. If another election occurs there or in any other constituency, or in the same constituency after the Register on which he votes has expired—that is, after six months—he may vote then in a different constituency, and he is not obliged to choose in which constituency he will vote until the day of election. I will not labour that point. It has been most admirably dealt with already by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Plymouth. But anyone can see that by introducing an anomaly of this kind you will raise the manipulation of political elections really into a fine art, and you will enormously increase the strength and importance of those persons who lend themselves to this kind of work. Another point with regard to this is that I do not think the Government have attached all the weight that should have been attached to the distinction between the ownership voter and the occupation voter. I think, at all events, they will admit that there is more to be said against the plural voter, in the case of the absentee owner who may have created a faggot vote and has no real living interest in the constituency, than against the occupation voter who has residence or place of business in two contiguous constituencies, who has precisely the same interest, fulfils the same duties, and performs the same obligations in both places. But though I think it right to point out these objections to the proposal of the Government, I am not in a position to oppose it root and branch. Indeed, I do not hesitate to say that I have always felt that the existence of this double qualification is in itself an anomaly, and that it cannot permanently take its place in our electoral system. All I say is that it is perfectly ridiculous and unfair to attempt to deal even with an acknowledged anomaly of this kind when it suits your purpose and to refuse to deal with a still greater anomaly, because it does not suit your purpose. What are the existing anomalies? I will point out one. The objection of my right hon. Friends on the Treasury Bench is a tremendously strong one as to the existence of two votes in one individual. But what about the two-Member constituencies? Let me take the case of Northampton and the case of West Birmingham and compare them. The two constituencies have almost the same number of electors; but the elector of West Birmingham can only give one vote for a Member, but the elector for Northampton may give two votes. Now, will my right hon. Friends explain or defend that anomaly? For my own part, I can only give one explanation of that anomaly. It is an explanation which was given by a gentleman who was brought before the Courts for bigamy. When he was asked why he had taken two wives he said it was because he was trying to get a good one. I can only suppose that the two votes given to the electors at Northampton is in order that they might get at least one good Member. But this anomaly, although quite as striking as that with which the Government deals, pales its ineffectual fire before the gross anomaly of the present distribution of electoral power. I have gone carefully into the question on the basis of the existing population. I am not going into the statistics now; I will only say I have them here if they are wanted; but this I can say without fear of contradiction, that dealing with the subject on that basis alone, which many people think unfair because taxation ought to be taken into account, whether you take England, Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, or whether you take the case of the counties or the boroughs, I could find you the case of two constituencies in any of these places in which the proportion of political power shall be four, or five, or six, or even seven to one. When you come to make the same sort of comparison between countries, it appears on the basis of population that England has 27 Members less than her proper proportion. Why do not the Government deal with this? There is no other anomaly touched in the Bill which compares with it. The others are matters of small Party or personal gain. Here and there a grievance to an individual may be redressed, here and there the character of a constituency may be changed, but that is an infinitesimal matter compared with this great anomaly, under which it is determined, from time to time, and has been determined again and again, who shall form the Government of the county and what shall be the legislation passed through this House. It goes to the very root of our Constitutional system, and yet the Government pass it by almost without mention. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was good enough to quote a passage in which I explained the opinions of the Government of 1884, when it was proposed to couple redistribution with franchise. He appears to appeal to that as being a precedent which he and his friends are now entitled to follow. It is not a precedent at all for the action the Government are now taking. The Liberal Government at that time believed that it was the object of the Tory Party to put upon us the duty of dealing with redistribution, not in order that redistribution might be carried, but in order that the franchise might be swamped. That was our belief at that time, but subsequent events showed that we were wrong. Because when the controversy had assumed certain proportions, at a conference between the Leaders of the two Parties, the whole scheme of redistribution was agreed to by the Tory Party, and of course, under those circumstances, the whole difficulty disappeared, and both Bills were practically carried at the same time. That is the precedent which you have got to follow. You may think you are perfectly justified in expressing the same opinion of the present Opposition as we formed with regard to the Tory Opposition in 1884. You may consider, if you like, that we are animated not by the desire for redistribution, but by a desire to throw out this Bill. Test your opinion as we did in 1884. See whether the Leaders of the Unionist Party are not ready at this moment for a redistribution scheme. You have absolutely no excuse; the ground is cut from under your feet. You have the precedent of 1884. I ask you to fulfil the precedent of 1884, and unless you find that the Union Party are using redistribution now merely as a stalking-horse, you will be able to add redistribution to your proposals for electoral reform, and then, at all events, we shall no longer be able to accuse you of proposing a partial system intended entirely for the benefit of a particular Party. But if you will not do that, there is at least one thing which you might do. You might proceed by the process of natural selection. There is no doubt as to where natural selection would lead you, but in this case you know where there is a gross and glaring grievance, and you know how to remedy it, because you have done it already. You have got all the materials to your hand. All you have to do is to insert a provision in this Bill that 23 Members shall be taken from Ireland. Insert that in any redistribution scheme, and then, although you will not have given us complete redistribution such as everyone would desire to see, at all events you would, as you have done in other parts of this Bill, have removed one of the most pressing and most crying inequalities. Why will you not do it? It is hardly necessary to answer the question. Because you would commit suicide. Because these inequalities are the very foundation of the Government, because the Government subsists upon them, and because it would not exist one single day if these grievances were redressed. Of course, the Government will not do that, but we must consider the Bill with that knowledge. Sir, I have taken some opportunity of ascertaining the opinions of my constituents, and I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as they represent the feelings of the "predominant partner," they will have nothing to say to a Bill which they consider so evidently unfair and unjust. Without attributing any motives to the Government, I only say that the result of their policy is so manifest, so self-evident, that I do not believe any fair or impartial man will justify their proceedings. We are looking forward to the time, at no very great distance, when the Government will have to appeal to the country. They will have to go and ask for a mandate from the country, and ask for the approval of the country to the policy which they have pursued, especially upon that great Home Rule policy, in regard to which we have, and the constituencies have, fortunately, the details at our disposal. That is what is going to happen very shortly. We object to this Bill because, in anticipation of that election, it is an attempt to pack the jury of the nation before taking the verdict, and on that account I hope no impartial man will support this Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): My right hon. Friend has, on the whole, fulfilled the promise with which he began; he has endeavoured to present to the House a criticism more or less upon the merits of the Bill. He has, however, in conclusion, applied to it the same criticism, and he attacks us in the same way as my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury did yesterday. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham says this is an attempt to pack the jury. Well, that is only saying in another way what the Member for Bury said yesterday, more fully, with greater iteration, and with much larger moral pretence. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bury is a man who commands great and deserved authority in this House. He never speaks without interesting the House, and seldom without instructing it; but he has a mood which does not instruct the House, and I do not think it much edifies the House, and that mood my right hon. Friend indulged to an extent, so far as I know, unprecedented in his Parliamentary career yesterday—a mood which is marked by a combination of manner and tone and language, though I do not call it a felicitous combination, of the bar, the stage, and the pulpit. My right hon. and learned Friend thought it worthy of himself to say that we have put forward this measure for the purpose of weakening our political foes. He said we were concerned in a registration agents' plot. He rose to a higher pitch still of pharisaical exaltation, when he said we were acting in a way which was contrary to all the accepted traditions and rules of public honour, and that we were turning statesmanship into chicanery. Let us look a little at this. If I thought we had spent the time we have spent in framing this Bill with the special object of Party advantage, I confess that my observation of the history of Parties in this country in modern times would lead me to suppose that we had been entirely wasting our time, because it is impossible for any Government or for any House of Commons to forecast—I do not say what the effect of a particular reform may be in carrying out certain principles—but to forecast the effect of a change such as we propose upon Party fortunes. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth said we had crowded the Register because we hoped that would be the best means of promoting the fortunes of our Party. There is a remarkable assumption in that statement that implies that the sooner the voice of the country is heard the more certain it is to be to our advantage. But it is absurd to pretend that it is possible to forecast with accuracy or with probability what will be the ultimate consequence of a measure of Parliamentary reform when you remember what happened in the year 1832. It is untrue to state that the crowding of the Register has uniformly resulted in favour of the Liberal Party. Rather the contrary. The first alteration of the franchise was in 1867. From 1867 to 1894 the tenure of Office by the Conservative Party was not less but greater than the tenure of Office by that Party in the previous 27 years from 1840 to 1867. That is an illustration of the folly of which we should have been guilty, if we had brought forward this Bill solely with the view of promoting our own Party ends.

SIR H. JAMES: Sir Charles Russell said that.

MR. J. MORLEY: There are enthusiastic partisans, I dare say, who think this measure will tend to the advantage of our Party. In my mind, at all events, there is no such motive, and there is not even a very confident expectation that the changes we are now making must necessarily work in our favour, though I have a confident expectation for other reasons. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, though ironical at our expense, was much more good-natured in his irony than my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury. Upon these points I will follow him shortly and rapidly through the various objections he has made to the Bill. My right hon. Friend began by criticising our action in not codifying and simplifying registration. He said, "Why do you not simplify registration?" The answer is very simple, and it applies particularly to the case of the lodgers. You cannot simplify registration without simplifying the franchise. What is the first step to simplying registration? You can only do it effectually in one way, and that is by manhood suffrage. If my right hon. Friend is going to make the simplification of registration the end-all and be-all of reform at this stage, he must revert to the opinion which he used to hold, that manhood suffrage was the proper system of electoral franchise in this country. My right hon. Friend talked about the double revision, and he made various criticisms upon it from the point of view of expense. We are perfectly alive to all that can be said on that subject, but I want the House to realise what the situation is. In every quarter of the House you agree that the qualifying period of residence is too long. My right hon. Friend says that you would be content if that period were made six months; but, however that may be, you all agree that the present period is too long. Well, this method of a double registration is one of the means by which you make that shortening of the period effective. It is no use whatever to shorten the period to three months unless you give the men whose period of qualification you shorten the opportunity of getting on to the Register in a shorter time than that which the right hon. Gentleman opposite last year described as a scandal and an outrage. Last year we endeavoured to meet the difficulty by a system of transferring votes. You would not have that. You rejected it, and if you do not have that, or if you do not have a second revision as proposed in the present Bill, what is the good of doing that which you all admit to be a desirable thing to do—namely, shortening the period of qualification? As to having an official Registrar, that was suggested last year, and I still think it would be highly desirable to have a public officer who should be responsible for placing upon the Register the name of every man who has a right to be there; but last year it was found, not on one side of the House only, but in every quarter of the House, that there was no chance of our coming to any agreement upon that proposal. There was the difficulty as to who should appoint that officer, whether he should be appointed by a local body or by a branch of the Government, and these difficulties so weighed in the minds of hon. Members in all parts of the House that it would have been absurd to renew that proposal this year. We, therefore, make this proposal for a second revision. As my right hon. Friend very truly says, it is not a point which should be made a Party question, and, of course, it is one of those questions which the House, when we get into Committee, will have to decide. The next proposal that my right hon. Friend dealt with was the proposal that the elections should all be taken on one day. He argued that America furnished no precedent at all. So far as the Presidential election is concerned, I quite agree with him. We do not find in that any precedent for taking the elections on one day; but more important elections are those for the election of State offices affecting the Government. These elections, affecting sometimes 15 or 20 offices, take place on one day, and all are decided by one electoral operation. We are entitled to whatever advantage the practice in America gives us. I wonder if my right hon. Friend has realised the number of days that an election now takes. I have the figures for four Elections—1880, 1885, 1886, and 1892. These are the actual number of days between the first and last Election—in 1880, 27 days; in 1885, 24; in 1886, 29; and in 1892, 25 days. Surely, the whole House must feel that to leave the country in all the fever and confusion of an election for a period of 29 days, or even 24 days, is not an arrangement which can be reconciled with practical common sense and convenience. When it is said that our proposal would lead to an enormously increased expenditure of money, I ask the House to consider what the saving to the country would be. It would be counted not by tens or hundreds or thousands of pounds, but by millions, if you can shorten the electoral period as we propose. My right hon. Friend asked why a day should be named in the Bill. I will tell my right hon. Friend the reason for it. What would happen if we did not name a day in the Bill? The Government of the day who would have to dissolve Parliament and issue the Proclamation would have to fix the day on which the polls should be taken. By inserting a day in the Bill you are relieving the Government of the day from what the experience of 1892 gave us some reason to feel is a most invidious responsibility. For my own part, if I were a Member of the Government who had to name the day of the week on which the elections should take place, I should be extremely sorry for it, and I would much rather that it should be done by Act of Parliament. Then said my right hon. Friend, "Even if that be so, you have chosen the very worst day in the week." Well, Sir, my own experience is that there is a vast deal of superstition among election agents about which is the most convenient day. No doubt there are some places, irrespective of Party, where Monday, for instance, is more convenient than Saturday, and in some other places Thursday, but we have fixed on Saturday as, on the whole, most convenient and least open to objection. I admit that there are objections in the case of the Jews, but I understand that they would not be prevented from registering their votes. Then my right hon. Friend mentioned the small shopkeepers. I do not believe that the fact that Saturday is market day would make it a burden to the small shopkeepers to go to the poll. This is a matter of experience, and what we find is that the small shopkeeper goes to the poll the first thing in the morning. My right hon. Friend then talked about the three months' qualifying period, and drew a curious picture, very like one we had last night, of some ardent capitalist or contractor bringing 30 or 50 labourers into a constituency with a view to turning the scale. Of course, there is no end to these hypothetical cases; but this contractor was going to take his men into Birmingham. I wonder what good he would do there?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I was bound to name some place. I might have used the expression X. Of course, in all the separate constituencies in Birmingham we have a majority of 2,000 or 3,000.

Mr. J. MORLEY: Does it not occur to my right hon. Friend that it would cost the contractor a great deal less to turn each one of these gentlemen into 40s. freeholders? He would not have the trouble of moving them then. But there is no end to these combinations. My right hon. Friend said, "Why have you not dealt with the question of the lodger?" Well, the question of the lodger is, in my judgment, a very difficult one, and I believe that you will never solve it until you adopt the solution which my right hon. Friend and I used to think the right solution. The Party opposite say, "You object to deal effectively with the lodger franchise because you are afraid that the sons of squires and parsons will get votes," and then they ask, "Why should not the sons of squires and parsons be capable citizens?" But let me point out that equality is desirable. If the sons of the squire and the parson have a right to perform the function of citizenship, why is not the son of the labourer to have the same right? [*Cries of* "He has it now."] Now, as to the question of the payment of rates. My right hon. Friend says that the payment of rates is the only remaining test of civil obligation. He seems to suppose that it is a good thing that a vote should be a screw for collecting the rate. He described very energetically the class whom we will call for shortness "wastrels," and said that the abrogation of the rating qualification, the exemption from the necessity of paying rates, would have the effect of benefiting this class. But a little reflection upon what we propose exactly to do will show my right hon. Friend that this is the very class whom we do not touch by the proposal of the Bill, because the rates in small houses are compounded for.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Not in Scotland.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am talking of England and Ireland, where the rates are largely compounded for; and here is a monstrous thing—if the landlord fails to pay the rates the occupying tenant loses his franchise. That, at all events, is an anomaly that we shall get rid of. The small defaulting wastrel class is therefore not the class that this clause will affect. It will affect, in fact, the more highly-rated houses. I should like to give an illustration from Irish experience of what may happen even when the rates are tendered for payment. A claim for a vote came before a Revising Barrister. The claimant's wife had tendered the poor rate collector 2s. 6d., the amount due, and the latter had refused to take the money, on the ground that he had not his rate-collector's book with him at the time. The Revising Barrister, on these facts, decided that as the rates had not, in fact, been paid, he could not allow the claim. That is the kind of disability people suffer under in the present state of the law. Now, about plural voting. My right hon. Friend knows quite well that he himself, in the old days of Parliamentary reform, 10 years ago, used to say that there were two things which were pressing—one was the payment of Members, and the other was the abolition of the plural vote.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I never said that either of these questions was more pressing than such subjects as redistribution.

Mr. J. MORLEY: My right hon Friend has forgotten.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not deny that I have advocated both the abolition of plural voting and the payment of Members, but I never put either forward as the first duty of the Government.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not refer to this for purposes of recrimination, but my right hon. Friend did say what he now has forgotten. On January 29, 1885, when he was in the Cabinet, he said—

> "In the meantime, two other points are now urgent, which I hope will receive early consideration."

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is absolutely consistent with what I have just stated. I said then that two other points were urgent, meaning two points besides redistribution and other important electoral reforms.

Mr. J. MORLEY: If the two points were urgent in January, 1885, I should think that they are still more urgent in May, 1894. My right hon. Friend said—

> "I am in favour of the principle of 'One Man One Vote,' and I object altogether to the plural representation of property. I will take my own case—I have six votes. I usually vote on the right side; but I consider this an anomaly altogether inconsistent with the principle on which we stand, that principle being that every householder, at all events, has an equal stake in the good government of the country, his life, happiness, and property all depending upon legislation which he is as much entitled to assist in framing as any one else."

I am fascinated by another sentence in this speech, which I shall therefore read—

> "If we are to make a distinction, I am not sure that it is not the poor man's interests that ought to be regarded first, for if you have bad legislation it may lessen the income of the rich man, but it may destroy altogether the means of subsistence of the poor man."

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Where is the inconsistency? I have said nothing different from that to-day.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I hope the House will understand that I am not taxing the right hon. Gentleman with inconsistency upon the merits of the proposal. What

I say is that if my right hon. Friend thought it urgent to remove this anomaly in 1885, why not remove it now? My right hon. Friend suggests that we ought to select certain anomalies to deal with, and asks why we do not touch the greatest evil of all—namely, the over-representation of Ireland. He says that we admitted by what we did last year in the Home Rule Bill that there was a case for reducing the Irish representation. Yes, we admit that there was a case for reducing that representation when we were going to make up in other ways for the loss which Ireland would thereby suffer here. But we are not bound by anything which we did last year to admit that the Irish representation ought to be reduced before you alter the whole system of Irish Government. Hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh at the Treaty-of-Union argument. I should like to remind them what view was taken of this argument by one of the greatest men who have sat in this House in our generation—I mean Mr. Bright. He said—

> "Nothing on earth will ever persuade me—unless I see it done—that this Imperial Parliament, which is representative of the people of Great Britain, will lessen the just, the Act-of-Union-settled representation of Ireland in this House."

When the Church point was raised he said—

> "You were free to alter the Church provision of the Act of Union, because there you were making a concession to Ireland; but you have no right, as the stronger party to a treaty dealing with the weaker, to weaken that party and to impose upon them a disadvantage."

As we have heard so much about the question of redistribution in Ireland, let me thus remind gentlemen belonging to the Unionist Party that one of the greatest Unionists himself held that this Imperial Parliament was incapable of reducing the treaty-settled representation of Ireland. But we have not heard in this Debate so much about redistribution generally as we might have expected, having regard to the Amendment moved by the hon. and learned Member opposite. The reason, I think, is pretty clear. The hon. and learned Member was followed by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, who showed what the effect of redistribution would be upon the Party to which the hon. and learned Member belongs. I have been informed that the hon. Gentlemen opposite who have interested the House by the speeches they have made during the course of this Debate do not want redistribution. If, therefore, we are to have anything like a redistribution of seats we certainly must have the new scheme done thoroughly. The hon. Member for Dover said, if we were to have redistribution thoroughly carried out, 9,350 would then be about the figures of an average constituency. We were favoured by a speech by the hon. Member for Hereford, who has 3,416 electors; the hon. Member for Dover has 5,156, and the hon. Member for Plymouth has half of 12,431. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bury has only 7,831, and the late Solicitor General for Scotland 3,195. Therefore, when I reflect on these facts, I see why redistribution has not played a very large part in the Debate. The right hon. Member for Bury drew a terrible picture of bogus voting, but he has forgotten that this rather fantastic means for manipulating constituencies would be just as possible now. The hon. Member for Southport took the case of a man who had a house in Derbyshire, another in London, and perhaps a mine in Cornwall, and he said in impassioned tones, "Has he not got a local interest in Derbyshire and in the Metropolis and in Cornwall?" I must say—and I hope that my saying this will not give offence—that this seems to me to be a most nonsensical argument to bring forward for the purpose of making out a case for the right to a plural vote on Imperial matters. It might be, on the other hand, a very good argument to bring forward in support of his right to vote for the County Councils of Derbyshire, London, and Cornwall. But the case here stands on an entirely different footing, and I do not admit for one moment that the mere fact of possessing property gives a man a special right to vote on Imperial as distinguished from local affairs. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment, overflowing with Christian charity, said that the Government had introduced this Bill because they felt that the education and intelligence of the country were against them. This kind of broad proposition may be well enough for a platform speaker to use, but it forms but a futile argument when delivered in this

House. I ask you, moreover, Is Scotland less educated than England? Certainly not; and yet Scotland is not hostile to the Government. Is East Manchester to be considered different in education and intelligence from South Manchester and Eccles because the one sends a Conservative and the others Liberals to Parliament? I submit that there is no substance in that argument, and that it is purely an artificial assertion which your Press choose to make, but which cannot be supported in any way whatever. The right hon. Gentleman made use of some language of Mr. Mill's about plural voting. Here is a passage in Mr. Mill's Autobiography in which, referring to his bringing forward this particular proposal, he cuts himself off by anticipation from the ideas of the hon. and learned Member by saying that, so far as he could observe,

> "this proposal of dual voting had found favour with no one, because all who desired plural voting desired it to be in favour of property, but not of intelligence."

Sir E. CLARKE: The proposal to which Mr. Mill then referred was the proposal of Mr. Disraeli to constitute a dual vote by what are called fancy franchises, and he draws a distinction between that and the dual vote which he had advocated.

Mr. J. MORLEY: At all events, Mr. Mill makes it clear that what he was looking to was not a special facility derived from the representation of property, but from a representation of intelligence and education. The hon. and learned Member's whole argument was that by these proposals we were damaging the influence of education. I hope I shall be the very last man in the House to disparage education or literary or scientific acquisitions. I do not think I should be ever guilty of such baseness as that. At the same time, however, I do think that you could have no worse Government for this country or for any other country than a Government composed of Masters of Arts. If you take the history of the last 50 or 60 years, I say that for political foresight and political insight the successive bands and generations of Radical cobblers in this House have beaten the University of Oxford over and over again. The proposals which have been made in spite of all that has been said are of a very modest character; and they are, moreover, of a perfectly straightforward character. We have not gone nearly so far as we should have liked if time had sufficed to bring forward a more complete measure, but we have made proposals which, we believe, will facilitate the access of those to political power whom Parliament, by its legislation, intends to have political power, and that the proposals which we now ask you to accept will do something to bring about that equality of citizenship which is the foundation of the freedom and the prosperity of this country.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, the Bill of the Government had not met the desire of a great number of their supporters with regard to the double Register and consequent additional expense. The effect of the Bill—and it was well that the Government should know it—would be to render it more difficult than even now for a poor man to enter Parliament, and pay his way while there. The Independent Labour Party must look out for themselves, but it was admitted that there were a number of men in the House who desired loyally to stand by their Party, who found it difficult to bear the expense of registration year by year. The expense of elections was as nothing compared with the expense of keeping up the registration. Keeping up the Registers twice a year instead of only once would make it extremely difficult for a poor man to keep up his position in Parliament. He would ask the Government carefully to consider the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Plymouth (Sir E. Clarke), both of whom had urged that the expense of the double Register, if double Register they were to have, should be borne either by the constituencies or by the Consolidated Fund. The cost of the Revising Barristers was £30,000 a year, and to that in the future would have to be added another £20,000. Hitherto the Revising Barrister had had a good deal of legal work to do; but so far as the Register was concerned, all there would be to decide in future would be whether or not a man had lived in a certain house and had lived there for a certain time. This work could be done by the registration officer, the expense of the

Revising Barrister's Court being done away with. With regard to the lodger franchise, it was more important in London than in any other part of the country, and there ought to be a distinctive lodger clause in the Bill dealing with London. The only chance a large number of electors in the Metropolis had of getting on the Register as voters was under the lodger qualification. He said either disfranchise them altogether or else give them a fair chance of getting upon the Register. Whilst he felt bound to support the Second Reading of the Bill, particularly in view of the form of the Amendment, he held himself free to vote on the points to which he had referred when the measure got into Committee. The time had come, he thought, when they should deal with this subject, not in a piecemeal fashion, but in a great consolidated Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House was, apparently, not aware that a consolidated Bill dealing with every point had been before the House for nine years. It was only the Bill of a private Member, and consequently did not, perhaps, even reach those who sat on the two Front Benches. At any rate, there had been no attempt to deal with it. His ambition was to see all properly qualified men put on the Register, and kept there, leaving it to their own consciences how they should vote.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 292; Noes 278.—(Division List, No. 40.)

**MR. P. J. O'BRIEN** (Tipperary, N.): I beg to intimate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I voted in the "No" Lobby through an error.

***MR. SPEAKER**: I am sorry I cannot help the hon. Member.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) BILL. (No. 192.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) BILL. (No. 193.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS,

That they have agreed to,—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 8) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Walter Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary districts of Gosport and Alverstoke, Harrow, Ilfracombe, Norwich, Ramsgate, and Redruth, ordered to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster and Mr. Shaw Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 220.]

### INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES (PURCHASE OF FEE SIMPLE) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lambert, Bill to give facilities to Industrial and Provident Societies for the Purchase of the Fee Simple of their Holdings, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lambert, Mr. James Rowlands, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Channing, Mr. Henry J. Wilson, Mr. David Thomas, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Crilly, and Mr. Cameron Corbett.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 221.]

It being after Seven of the clock, Mr. Speaker suspended the Sitting until Nine of the clock.

## EVENING SITTING.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

### SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

### BESTOWAL OF HONOURS.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

**SIR W. LAWSON** (Cumberland, Cockermouth) moved—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that whenever She bestows any title or honour on any of Her subjects She will be graciously pleased to issue a statement of the services for which such honours are bestowed, in the same manner as is done when the Victoria Cross is granted."

He said, he thought that this was a short, unassuming, unpretentious, and practical Amendment. It had nothing to do with hereditary titles. He was not going to argue about that to-night, because he thought they were too absurd to be argued about at any time. It had nothing to do with the House of Lords in its political capacity or functions. They would have plenty of opportunity of discussing that within the next few months or years. It had nothing to do with appointments involving the discharge of duties, or in reference to which certain services had to be performed. It had solely to do with marks of honour and distinction—such as peerages, knighthoods, baronetcies, stars, garters, and thistles. [*Laughter.*] The House laughed, but these decorations were much valued. It gave a man a pull to have some sort of handle to his name. Why it should be so he had no idea, except that he saw a good many things going on in this world which went to prove Carlyle's saying that there were 35,000,000 people in this country, mostly fools. They must have regard to the people amongst whom they lived. Take a baronetcy; he did not see any value in it; he had heard a baronet described as one who was not a nobleman and had ceased to be a gentleman. Notwithstanding this, they knew that titles and honours were sought after by the majority of mankind. In fact, all snobs wanted to be nobs; all asses sought thistles, and all Radicals wanted to be Peers. His Amendment, of course, was in the form of an Address to Her Majesty, and equally, of course, that was a matter of form. But, in his opinion, the Sovereign had nothing to do with the matter. The Sovereign was, as they all knew by the Constitution, the fountain of honour; but when the Sovereign distributed these honours the Sovereign acted for the Ministry of the day; the Ministry was responsible to that House, and the House was responsible to the country. Therefore, he said that these titles and honours belonged to the public. They talked now of Gladstone's Peers and Salisbury's Peers; and if they lived a little while longer, they would, no doubt, be speaking of Rosebery's Peers. Now, he wanted to make the Prime Minister more responsible to that House and to the country than he had hitherto been. The late Prime Minister said, in a memorable speech, that the time of that House was the property of the nation, and he (Sir W. Lawson) said that these honours and titles were the property of the nation. If, therefore, they were not given for national purposes they were clearly misapplied. Mind, he was not censuring anything that had been done in the past. He was not saying that the titles and honours and ribands and stars and garters and thistles conferred during the century had not been given for the very best of reasons to the very best and most deserving of people. In that respect he made no charge against anybody. What he wanted was that in the future it should be made more clear why these titles and honours were bestowed. He had sometimes thought that a Court of Revision in these matters, something like the Irish Land Court, would be rather a good thing, and that when a man had enjoyed a title or honour for two or three years he would be taken into Court and examined in order to see whether he was still worthy of it, and whether the man had ennobled the title in the same way that the title had ennobled the man. He thought there was something to be said for a tribunal of that kind. He remembered that when Lord Dudley was made a Peer it was proposed to admit him to the Council, but one of the Councillors got up and said he thought it was better that they should wait two or three years to see how he went on. That would be a very good principle to introduce in this matter. They might wait two or three years to see how the holders of titles and honours went on, and if they went on the honour or title could be confirmed. But they need not go so far as that. Let them have the means of knowing which public honours were given. By his Amendment it was proposed that the information should be given in the same way as when the Victoria Cross was conferred. The Victoria Cross was given for some heroic deed, such as saving a wounded man on the battlefield or rescuing a person from death by fire or water, and the recipient of the Victoria Cross considered it an honour to have the deed recorded on account of which it was conferred. He was sure that all those who were ennobled or who were made baronets or knights, or invested with stars, garters, or thistles, would be very glad that it should be recorded why they had got these honours and decorations. In the case of the soldier it should be recorded how many people he had killed; when a great politician got an honour it ought to be made known how many constituencies he had corrupted; and if he was a brewer it ought to be recorded how many barrels of beer he had brewed. Or when a man was removed to the Peerage because he was useless in the House of Commons it ought to be stated in his patent how self-sacrificing he was in consenting to be ennobled, inasmuch that being no good there he had gone to another place where he possibly could do some good. Such a record would be a very useful one, not only to the public, but to other people who wanted to get honours, as it would show them how to proceed. Above all things, an arrangement of this kind would make the whole proceeding open and aboveboard, and remove them from the suspicion of favouritism and jobbery. Beyond all that, he thought it was a real onward step in a democratic direction that it should be made quite clear that public honours would be bestowed alone for public services rendered. Holding these views, he begged to move his Amendment.

*MR. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) said, he felt at a great disadvantage, after his witty friend had been addressing the House, in rising to second the Amendment, but he had much pleasure in doing so; and he wished it to be understood that he meant no disparagement of what had been done in the past. No doubt what had taken place was suitable to the times, but the proceedings of that period did not come up to the requirements of the present. They wanted to know now why titles were conferred? The Victoria Cross was instituted in 1856, and was conferred on those who had done deeds of gallantry. The Victoria Cross was none the less valued because the deed of valour had been specified so that the country knew why it had been granted. On the contrary, he believed it was all the more valued. The Victoria Cross honour only lasted for life, whereas others were hereditary, and certainly, if it was thought desirable to record the service rendered in respect of an honour which only lasted for life, it was all the more desirable that where the honour was hereditary a full statement should be given as to why it had been granted. Many of them would like to know how it was that the transference of a man from that House to another House should so ennoble him and invigorate his blood that his sons were afterwards qualified to legislate for the country? It would be a great advantage to the successors of noblemen if they were able to specify, to use a Yankeeism, what their ancestors had done to gain the title and honour which should "reverberate through the corridors of eternity." He noticed that a Bill was introduced into the House the other day which would relieve Peers from being immured in "that living sepulchre" the House of Lords. He should think it would be a considerable gratification to them, and their grief might be assuaged if, instead of having to earn the Biblical formula of "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, go up higher," they might, as good sons of good and faithful fathers, go up higher by virtue of the published merits of their predecessors. This Amendment should be supported in the interests of the history of the country, for how many illustrious pages might be added to the country's history if there was a record of the deeds of valour or other deeds which ennobled the recipients of honours and gave them a place in the hereditary Peerage. There was, so far as he could see, no objection whatever to this Amendment, especially as it was not compulsorily retrospective. The proposal would tend to inculcate respect for a title. There were irreverent people who had no respect for titles, and he was not surprised at it, for he himself had heard of one person who seceded to one Party in order to be made a Baronet, and then returned to his own to be made a Peer. If rewards were to be given for political apostasy, let them know it, so that people could see what were the qualifications necessary to unlock the golden gate of nobility. Where there was a good reason for conferring a title there was all the more reason why the particulars should be made known. Although this Motion was not retrospective, he believed that if it passed into law many of the members of "our old nobility" would take steps to register the record of their titles, and thereby justify, or endeavour to justify, the honours which they enjoyed. He saw no reason why the Government should not, but every reason why they should, accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words

"an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that whenever She bestows any title or honour on any of Her subjects She will be graciously pleased to issue a statement of the services for which such honours are bestowed, in the same manner as is done when the Victoria Cross is granted,"—(*Sir W. Lawson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I suppose it is expected that I should give my hon. Friend some information on this subject; but I am sorry to say I am not in a position to do so, as I have never been in a position to dispense honours. It seems to me there is a difficulty in the proposal of my hon. Friend. The truth is, that in old days this practice used to obtain. I have seen a great many of the old patents of nobility, very long documents, which contained all the styles and titles and all the merits and virtues of their recipients. They corresponded very much to epitaphs. They detailed a great many virtues which nobody ever suspected their owners possessed. It is said *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* I will say *De honoratis nil nisi optimum.* It would be an invidious task, I am quite sure, to attribute to the recipients of honours a great number of merits which nobody ever believed them to possess. If, for instance, I had to ascribe the hereditary honours which my hon. Friend (Sir W. Lawson) possesses, I should attribute to him every virtue under the sun, except that which I observe he attributed to the Victoria Cross, that of having saved some people from water. If, on the other hand, my hon. Friend had to give me a character for the more transient honour which I hold, I am quite sure he would extol me far beyond my merits. On occasions when these honour are bestowed, you see in the daily organs of the Press extraordinary eulogiums upon the recipients of these honours. I hope my hon. Friend will admit that, whatever crimes may be attributed to the two Front Benches, they have not been guilty of indulging themselves in decorations. When we have, Mr. Speaker, the honour of dining at your hospitable board, we very seldom display a decoration. But there are people who attach enormous value to these distinctions. I do not know why it is. Lord Melbourne observed that there was only one Order in the world worth having, and that was the Garter, because there was no merit attached to it at all, and it was that which made it the first Order in Europe. I do not think to go into these matters in this extremely solemn, serious, and improving manner is the best method of dealing with them. I have always thought that in works of romance the romances which have a moral object are among the dullest and the poorest and the worst; and if you have decorations, and in the same way endeavour to attach a moral value to them, you destroy their interest very much. There is a good deal of amusing speculation in these decorations—first, as to why in the world the person desired to have them, and in the next place why he obtained them. It would spoil very much indeed this interesting speculation if we descended to details. I am reminded of the flies in amber—

"We know they're neither rich nor rare;
We wonder how, in the name of fortune, they got there."

I think there are in this world a great many people who get a great deal more than they deserve. On the other hand, there are a great many people who, perhaps, get a great deal less than they deserve. That reminds me of the story of Lord Erskine at the Bar. Somebody said it must be a great disappointment to him when he failed to obtain a verdict. His reply was—

"Well, I lose a good many verdicts I ought to have won, but, on the other hand, I win a great many verdicts I ought to have lost, and so, on an average, justice is done."

That is very much the same in this respect. A great many people get distinctions they do not deserve, and a great many people deserve distinctions and do not get them; but, on an average, justice is done. Under those circumstances, I hope my hon. Friend will not disturb a state of things which, on the whole, may not be ideally perfect, but which accommodates itself very much to the weakness of human nature. "After all," as a great writer observed, "there is a good deal of human nature about man," and that being so I do not think that we had better endeavour to reach these counsels of perfection, and under those circumstances I am afraid I cannot support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 52 ; Noes 34.—(Division List, No. 40.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

## THE GOLD AND SILVER QUESTION.

*Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire) said, he feared that he could not promise the House as interesting a discussion as that which had just taken place, but the subject he wished to bring before the House was at least as important as the former one. He believed that, according to the Rules of the House, he could not move the Resolution of which he had given notice, but he could, of course, draw attention to the subject with which it dealt. The Notice he had placed on the Paper was as follows :—

> "To attention to the Gold and Silver questio and to move. 'That, in view of the continued depression in Trade and Agriculture, and the dislocation of exchanges between Gold and Silver using countries, it is desirable that a stable par of exchange between Silver and Gold should be established by International agreement.'"

It might be thought by some too soon to raise this question after it was disposed of last year ; but the House would remember that most important events had happened since then. The Mints of India and the United States had both been closed to silver, and the effect had been to drive down the price of silver from 38d. to 29d. ; indeed, it touched 27d. not long ago, and all the evils caused by the demonetisation of silver had been gravely aggravated. He regretted that he could not take the judgment of the House on this question. A great change in public opinion had taken place since last year, and he was not without hopes that if it were possible to move this Resolution, and the Government were to leave the House free to exercise its judgment, a majority would affirm the bimetallic principle. Anyone who was present at the great Conference held during the last two days in the City must have felt that the question had at last taken hold of the financial classes. It was no longer viewed as it used to be, but was being very seriously discussed by the heads of some of the great financial houses. He had had great pleasure in hearing a letter read in Mr. Lidderdale's presence, stating that that gentleman might now be regarded as in large sympathy with the views of the bimetallists. Mr. Lidderdale was probably the most prominent man in the City of London at the present time, and he was only one of many who had been slowly coming round to the bimetallic view. He (Mr. Smith) did not think that the Government were in the least aware of the extent to which this question had gained ground in the country. He wished, in the first place, to call attention to the great depression in trade, which he believed was mainly the result of the phenomenal fall of prices caused by the demonetisation of silver. He spoke as one who had had 40 years' experience of the cotton trade of Lancashire, and he said it had never been in so desperate a condition before as it had been in the last few years. Profits had almost vanished, and the trade was slowly leaving the country and being transferred to the silver-using countries of Asia. He would give the House two or three figures which would place the matter in the clearest light. He would give the comparative increase of consumption of cotton in the last 20 years in England, on the Continent, in the United States, and in India. The increase in England had been only 17 per cent., or less than 1 per cent. per annum, whilst during the last three years there had been a steady decrease——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present ; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. S. SMITH went on to say that, whilst the increase of the consumption of cotton in England during the last 20 years had been 17 per cent., the increase on the Continent had been 123 per cent. ; in the United States it had been 125 per cent. ; and in India it had been 680 per cent. To put it another way, 20 years ago England consumed 46 per cent. of all the cotton in the world, while last year she only consumed 29 per cent. He would only trouble the House with one more reference to figures—namely, those relating to the shipment of yarns from this country to the far East as compared with the shipments from India. In 1876 the shipments of yarns from this country to the far East amounted to 30,000,000 lbs., while last year they were rather less than 28,000,000 lbs., showing a declining trade. But let the House mark the difference in India. In 1876 the shipments were only 6,000,000 lbs., while last year they were 132,000,000 lbs., or more than four times as much as they were from England. He asserted that the main cause of this transference of trade was the enormous fall in the price of silver, which acted as a huge bounty on Indian manufactures. The English manufacturer got paid 40 per cent. less in gold from all Asiatic markets than he did 20 years ago, but he had to pay about the same wages and fixed charges; and as a result he found himself almost ground to death, while his competitor in India, China, and Japan sold his goods and paid his wages in the same standard as before—a standard that had scarcely varied in 20 years—and he reaped such large profits that his trade developed by leaps and bounds at our expense. As a matter of fact, profit had almost gone out of the Lancashire cotton trade. The Oldham Joint Stock Mills, a vast industry employing £6,000,000 of capital, had only averaged 2½ per cent. dividend for the past 10 years, and the capital value of the stock had fallen to something like a third of what it was. From what he knew of the trade, the bulk of private concerns were no better off. The fact was, if matters did not improve, they were threatened with a catastrophe in Lancashire. On the other hand, the profits in India were very large up till last year, when the Mints were closed and the rupee was forced up. The profits in Japan were so large that last year 40 cotton mills divided from 10 to 25 per cent., and they were in consequence running new mills up like mushrooms, and taking away the trade by which the people of Lancashire lived. This state of things opened up a dreary vista of endless labour disputes, as employers, to avoid bankruptcy, were forced to bring down wages, which the Trade Unionists were equally determined to resist. He could not speak with the same knowledge of other textile industries, but he understood that the state of the woollen industry was very bad. The iron trade was probably as bad as the cotton trade. The make of pig-iron had fallen from 8,250,000 tons to 6,750,000 in four years; indeed, this great trade seemed to be leaving the country. They were all familiar with the depressed condition of the coal trade, and another labour war seemed looming in the near future. On agriculture he need not say a word; the facts were so notorious. The painful feature of the situation was the decay of the great producing industries by which the masses of the people lived. The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) would no doubt point to the elasticity of the Income Tax Returns. He quite admitted that he was himself puzzled by this fact, as it did not in the least correspond with the condition of trade. The marvellous way in which the Income Tax keeps up was, he believed, owing to the extraordinary profits of the distributing trades, which bought goods wholesale at 40 per cent. decline as compared with 20 years ago whereas retail prices were relatively much higher. The great cause of the depression of the producing industries was the almost continuous decline of prices since 1873, when silver demonetisation commenced, being over 40 per cent. It was hopeless to attempt to carry on business profitably with such a decline; it crippled all enterprise, led to constant loss, and reduced trade to stagnation. No surer sign of this existed than the extraordinarily low rate of interest for discounting first-class bills. The inevitable result of this state of things was increasing friction in the relations of employer and employed. There had been more violent labour wars and more misery among the working classes last year than in any year since the Chartist riots. If the decline went on labour wars would become more and more disastrous, and a great increase of Socialism would be the inevitable result. We now hear every winter the wail of the unemployed, and if this process went on it would become worse and worse. The same state of things existed on the Continent and in the United States. In all those countries the same great depression existed with bitter labour wars and the great growth of anarchy. One common cause accounted for it all; they were all suffering from the extraordinary decline of prices, which paralysed trade and practically confiscated the capital of the active industrial class for the benefit of the money-lending and mortgage-holding class. No competent economist except Mr. Giffen doubted that the main cause of this trouble was the demonetisation of silver and the consequent appreciation of gold. The history of this century showed the enormous influence of monetary causes. The dreariest time in our country was the period from 1815 to 1848, when prices fell 50 per cent. after the resumption of cash payments, which practically doubled the weight of the huge national debt. Then came the wonderful revival caused very largely by the gold discoveries in Australia and California, when prices rose 40 per cent. in 20 years, and that, too, in spite of an immense increase in production, and the introduction of railways, steamers, and telegraphs. That was the most buoyant period we ever had, and the last 20 years had been just the opposite. The demonetisation of silver had practically undone the effect of the gold discoveries, and prices were now considerably lower than in 1848, or any time, in this country. Let the House contrast the two periods—the one all hopefulness, with trade advancing by leaps and bounds, and the other marked by almost continued depression. In the first period our exports rose from £63,000,000 in 1849 to £255,000,000 in 1873; while they fell back last year to £218,500,000. If we had to choose between an appreciating and a depreciating standard, surely it was much better to have the latter. Many people held a strong opinion that cheap prices were good things. His opinion was, that cheap prices which were due to an appreciating standard were an evil, and nothing but an evil. The great fall in prices had been the result not of the economising of production, but of the appreciation of the standard. The economising of production was in full force during the previous 20 years without producing a similar result. No explanation could be given of the enormous fall of the last 20 years except that by the closing of the Mints against silver one-half of the money supply of the world had been prevented from doing its proper work. The beneficial effect of a large supply of money was well put by the economist Jevons, who said—

> "I cannot but agree with M'Culloch that, putting out of sight individual causes of hardship, if such exist, a fall in the value of gold must have a most powerfully beneficial effect. It loosens the country, as nothing else could, from its old bonds of debt and habit. It throws increased rewards before all who are making and acquiring wealth somewhat at the expense of those who are enjoying acquired wealth. It excites the active and skilful classes of the community to new exertions, and is to some extent like a discharge from his debts is to the bankrupt, long struggling with his burdens."

The period 1850-73 had the benefit of this influence, so well expounded by Jevons. The period since then, thanks to the demonetisation of silver, had had just the opposite, and prices were now lower than at any time within this century. The fall of 40 per cent. since 1873 brought them to a considerably lower scale of prices than in 1848, for the House would observe that a fall of 40 per cent. being calculated on a higher figure was much more than the rise of 40 per cent. Take 100 as the average price of 1848, a rise of 40 per cent. took it to 140, but a fall of 40 per cent. on this figure took it to 84, or 16 per cent. under the prices of 1848. A common feature marked these periods of a great fall of prices. It was the virtual transference to the mortgagee of much of the property of the nation. Land, houses, factories, industrial plant that were burdened to 50 per cent. of their value 20 years ago, were now, through the fall of prices, burdened to 80 or 90 per cent. of their value, and in vast numbers of cases the mortgagee had foreclosed. This was felt just as much in the United States, and in France and Germany, as in England. The small farmers in those countries were crushed to death by the money-lenders, and immense social bitterness was the result. Another inevitable result was the growth of protection. All producers in those countries sought to keep up prices by constantly adding to their tariffs, and no country had suffered so much as ours from this process. Most wonderfully had the prediction of the far-sighted man, Ernest Seyd, been fulfilled. Writing in 1871, when the crusade against silver was just beginning, he said—

> "The strong doctrinism existing in England as regards the gold valuation was so blind that when the time of depression set in there would be this especial feature—the economical authorities of the country would refuse to listen to the cause here foreshadowed. Every possible attempt would be made to prove that the

> decline of commerce was due to all sorts of causes and irreconcilable matters. The workman and his strikes would be the first convenient target, then speculation and over-trading would have their turn. Later on, foreign nations, unable to pay in silver, would have recourse to Protection. When a number of other secondary causes developed themselves, then many would-be wise men would have the opportunity of pointing to specific reasons which, in their eyes, accounted for the falling off in every branch of trade. Many other allegations would be made, totally irrelevant to the real issue, but satisfactory to the moralising tendency of financial writers. The great danger of the time would then be that among all this confusion and strife England's supremacy in commerce and manufactures might go backwards to an extent which could not be redressed when the real cause became recognised and the natural remedy was applied."

These were just the explanations they heard nowadays from many would-be wise men. The City articles written in the interest of the financial class in London—and the same was true of Paris, Berlin, and New York—had tried for a long time to throw dust in the eyes of the democracy, but the time was near at hand when this conspiracy would be unmasked, and he ventured to predict that some statesmen who were now opposing this movement would experience sudden conversions. The time was far too short for him to go into other aspects of this great question. It would not be fair to subsequent speakers, but it might be expected that he should say a word or two about the *crux* of the question—namely the ratio to be established. He only spoke for himself, but he did not believe it was either possible or expedient to go back to 15½ to 1. His own leaning was to 22 or 24 to 1, which was about the present position of the respective yield of the metals measured by weight. This would correspond with the rupee at about 1s. 3d. As to the possibility of maintaining that rate by international agreement, he would only say that a Royal Commission of the ablest and most competent men were practically unanimous that it could be done. That opinion was expressed by Lord Herschell, who still adhered to it, and he asserted that no other opinion was possible upon the evidence submitted to them. They simply asserted that what was done in the past could be done again, and done better, because it could be done in a much more scientific manner. He strongly suspected that this country would repeat the story of the Roman King and the Cumæan sibyl. Twice the sibyl brought her books to the King, big with the fate of Rome; twice he refused to give her the price, and each time she burned a portion and raised the price. The third time she came with the remaining volumes, and he was glad to give the enhanced price she asked. Twice this country had been asked by some of the greatest Powers in the world to aid them in setting up the old bimetallic system, and twice she refused. The time might come before long when she would go cap in hand to ask them to join her, and find the bargain a much harder one to drive than would have been the case had she been wise in time.

Mr. KNOX (Cavan, W.) said, he had much pleasure in supporting the Motion. He could not profess to follow the hon. Member, who had such an intimate knowledge of the subject, into the wide aspects of the bimetallic question, but he proposed to deal with the question from the point of view of the Irish peasant farmer, and, therefore, of the whole of the Irish people. The Irish peasant farmer was a man who had to pay every year certain sums to the landlord or to the State, and that sum had been increasing year by year. Of course, he knew there were some people who still denied that there had been any appreciation of gold. The argument seemed a strange one. On the one hand, they were told that the precious metals, like everything else, were governed by the laws of supply and demand. If they were, would it not be the greatest breach of the laws of supply and demand ever known for gold not to have appreciated? Everything had been done that could be done to produce the appreciation of gold. The supply of gold had very slightly increased. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made an exclamation of surprise at that statement. The increase in the supply of gold——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present;—

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Ten o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, 7th May 1894.*

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### ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS AND WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889 (SCHEME FOR THE COUNTY OF FLINT).

Queen's Answer to Address of the 17th day of April last, delivered as follows :—

"I have received your Address praying that I will withhold My assent to the following portion of the Flintshire Education Scheme, Clause 93, Sub-section (*b*) from the words 'boarding house' to the end, and the whole of Sub-section (*c*). I will comply with your advice."

## STATE OF THE NAVY.

### QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

***Lord HOOD of AVALON** called attention to the very large increase which has been made in the strength of Foreign Navies since the passing of the Naval Defence Act, and is still being rapidly proceeded with; and asked whether, under these conditions, the increase in the *matériel* and *personnel* of the Navy, provided for in the Naval Estimates, is sufficient to ensure the command of the sea to this country in time of war, and adequate protection to the vast interests of the British Empire. He said, it could not be denied that the maintenance of the British Navy at such a standard of strength as would ensure to this country the command of the sea in time of war, and provide adequate protection to the vast interests of the Empire must be recognised as a subject of the very highest national and Imperial importance, and as one on which the very existence of this country as a first-class Power must depend. The late Government, being deeply impressed with the extreme importance of this subject, and having in view the very large increase being made to the strength of Foreign Navies, decided after full consideration to raise the strength of the Navy to a standard which should make it equal to a combination of the Navies then existing and projected of any two Foreign Powers, a project of naval defence which was to be carried into effect by April, 1894. The allotted time had now expired, and that the programme had been completed in the most satisfactory manner had been acknowledged on all hands. It was a far wiser policy to establish and maintain a reliable standard of strength for the Navy than, through false economy, to allow it to fall into a weak condition inadequate to protect the vast interests of the Empire, the result of which must be, as former experience had conclusively shown, the creation of a state of panic whenever a scare of war arose, and an excessive expenditure of money in the endeavour to provide hastily and, therefore, inadequately, for what should have been ready at hand. The increase made by the late Government in the strength of the Navy was not intended to be a mere spurt; but it was decided that this established standard of strength should be maintained in future, that a very careful watch should be kept upon any projected increase in the strength of Foreign Navies, and that provision should be made for increasing the strength of our own Navy to such an extent as would maintain the established standard. Opinions no doubt differed considerably whether the standard of strength established by the Naval Defence Act was sufficient to meet the requirements of the Empire; but his own opinion was that, provided our cruisers were maintained in sufficient numbers to thoroughly protect our vast commerce, and provided the *personnel* of the Navy was maintained at such a strength as would secure the rapid manning of our War Fleet in an emergency the country might be satisfied. But under no condition whatever should any decrease in this strength be allowed. A great increase had been made in Foreign Navies, especially in the case of France and Russia. In France the increase in vessels built and building up to the end of 1893 consisted of nine battleships, five very powerful first-class armoured cruisers, 13 other powerful cruisers, and five exceedingly fast torpedo gun-vessels—a total increase of 32 vessels. In Russia the increase consisted of seven battleships, four very powerful armoured coast-defence vessels, two of the most powerful first-class armoured cruisers in the world, and six exceedingly fast torpedo vessels—total

19. For France and Russia combined the increase was 51 vessels, of which 16 were battleships, four very powerful armoured coast-defence vessels, and seven first-class armoured cruisers. In view of that very large increase it had been expected that in our Estimates for last year provision would have been made for such an increase to the strength of the Navy as would have ensured the maintenance of the standard established by the Naval Defence Act; but that was not done, and the result had been that during the last 18 months the Navies of France and Russia had been rapidly increasing, while ours had been almost standing still. What had been done to increase the strength of the Navy during the last 18 months, beyond what was provided by the late Government? In the Estimates for 1892–3 provision was made by the late Government for building three first-class battleships. Those three vessels would have been commenced in 1892 had the late Government remained in Office; but a change of Government took place, and the first of those battleships was not commenced until April, 1893. The other two were not commenced until last December. It was stated in the Navy Estimates that the sole reason for this delay was the expediency of considering all the circumstances in connection with the loss of the first-class battleship *Victoria* before those two new battleships were commenced. That appeared to be a very plausible reason for the delay; but, as a matter of fact, 14 months had elapsed between the date at which provision was made for commencing those battleships and the loss of the *Victoria*, consequently it was difficult to see how the delay in the commencement of those two battleships could be attributed to that terrible event. The only real increase which had been made in the strength of the Navy during the last 18 months beyond what was provided for by the late Government consisted in the building of five cruisers—of which the two most powerful were not put out to build by contract until last December, although the money had been provided for them eight months previously—two sloops, and a considerable number of torpedo-boat destroyers. In June last the country sustained the grievous loss of the first-class battleship *Victoria* with her gallant admiral and some 350 officers and men. The loss of that ship should have been replaced with as little delay as possible. But the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty, in answer to a question by himself in that House whether it was intended to take a Supplementary Estimate to replace the *Victoria*, stated that the loss of a single battleship was not of such extreme importance as to render it necessary to take a Supplementary Estimate for replacing her at once, and thus many months had been lost. The next point was the relative strengths of the British, French, and Russian ships built and building up to the end of 1893, the figures which he would quote were from his own personal knowledge and he believed them to be absolutely correct. Of battleships—which are essentially the class of vessels by which future naval wars must eventually be decided—we had 45, of which the two most powerful were only commenced last December. France had 34 and Russia 15. We were therefore at the end of 1893 in a minority of four battleships. Of armoured coast-defence vessels we had 17, 8 of which were stationed permanently abroad as harbour defence vessels. Consequently we had only nine available for service in European waters. Against those France had 14 and Russia 16—total 30—all available for service in European waters. In that class of vessel we were, therefore, in reality, in a minority of 21. But, in his opinion, if our battleships were maintained in sufficient strength, it would not be necessary to build more vessels solely for coast defence. Of first-class powerful armoured cruisers we had 18, France nine, and Russia 11. We were, therefore, in a minority of two. But in other cruisers we had a large majority (40), *i.e.*, 111, against 54 French and 17 Russian. However, the interests which our cruisers would have to protect in time of war were infinitely greater than those of France and Russia combined, the total tonnage of our Mercantile Marine being not less than eight times as great as that of France and Russia combined; and the value of our cargoes afloat at any one time was estimated at £150,000 sterling. We therefore required an additional number of cruisers in order to afford adequate protection to our vast mercantile interests.

In torpedo-boat destroyers we had at present a large superiority, but we required still more of those valuable vessels in order to protect our harbours and shipping in time of war from the attacks of the swarms of the enemies' torpedo-boats, which had been organised and stationed at posts opposite our coasts, from Dunkirk to Brest; and also in the Mediterranean. With regard to the increase in the strength of the Navies of France and Russia provided for this year, the figures were: France, three first-class battleships, eight very powerful cruisers, and a considerable number of smaller vessels; Russia, three battleships, one of by far the most powerful armour-plated cruisers in the world; of which class she had already two built or building, and several smaller vessels. Therefore, any new building programme for this country, if we were to maintain the standard of strength established by the Naval Defence Act, must start by providing 10 first-class battleships; next, a certain number of second-class battleships to compensate for the large deficiency in coast-defence vessels; and, thirdly, two first-class armoured cruisers. We also, in his opinion, required an increase of 25 second-class cruisers of the best type, and 20 more torpedo-boat destroyers. That was the smallest addition, in his opinion, which would meet our present and immediate future requirements. Now, what was the increase provided for in *matériel* in the Estimates? It consisted of seven first-class battleships, on two of which only very little work was to be done this year; six second-class cruisers, and two smaller sloops. This programme of increase, they were told by the Admiralty, was the result of a carefully-considered programme extending over five years; but, as battleships take a much longer time to build than cruisers, they were to be commenced in the earlier years, and the cruisers of different types would be commenced in the later years covered by the programme. From the wording of that statement it appeared that seven battleships were the total number included in that programme. Perhaps Lord Spencer would state whether that was correct or not. But, as a matter of fact, the programme, as far as disclosed, left us in a deficiency of three battleships, 13 armoured coast-defence vessels, and two very powerful first-class armoured cruisers. Of course, it might be intended in the later years to commence more battleships; but, at the same time, who was to know that the naval strength of France and Russia would not also be increased according to carefully-considered programmes extending over a term of years as in our own case? The next important point to call attention to was the expenditure on ship construction. In France last year it was £2,800,000; in Russia, £2,670,000; in this country £2,937,000. If those two countries consequently continued to spend these large sums in new ship construction, it would be absolutely necessary for our annual expenditure on that head to be increased to £5,500,000. Provision, he was glad to see, had been made for constructing a dock at Gibraltar, a want which had been urgently felt for many years. Having at last decided upon it, the Government might have been expected to complete the work as soon as possible. The total estimate for the dock was £366,000, and the amount taken in the Estimates for rapidly proceeding with that important work was £1,000. That did not give hope of a very speedy conclusion. Next, he would consider the present state of the *personnel* of the Navy and the increase provided for it in the Estimates. Upon that, the all-important question for consideration was —were our resources at present sufficient to meet our requirements for manning our War Fleet rapidly in case of an emergency? Without the slightest hesitation he said they were not, and he would prove it by figures. Vessels without a sufficient number of trained officers and men to man them were of but little use in an emergency. Our total requirements in officers and men for manning our War Fleet during the present year amounted approximately to 91,000 men, of whom 6,100 were officers. Our total resources in active service officers and men to meet those requirements amounted approximately to 68,600, leaving a deficiency of 22,400. Dealing first with the officers we were fairly supplied with captains, commanders, and even engineer officers, but the deficiency in lieutenants and navigating officers was very serious, amounting at present to no less than 390. That was a very difficult matter to deal with, and the deficiency could not be made up by merely increasing the naval cadets. Difficulty would arise in finding occupation for a very largely increased number of lieutenants at sea in time of peace, and they would gradually lose their efficiency. The only way of meeting this large deficiency at present was by largely promoting our sub-lieutenants and employing our retired officers and officers of the Royal Naval Reserves and warrant officers in the performance of lieutenants' duties. Every inducement should be held out to officers in the Naval Reserve. As to the naval pensioners, the important point was how many of them would be found fit for sea service if called out? What number of the Naval Reserve could we reasonably rely upon obtaining at short notice, say in a fortnight? He considered that if 3,500 pensioners were found fit for sea service, and 7,000 Royal Naval Reserve men were obtained in a fortnight, we should be very fortunate. Suppose that we could obtain from these two sources 10,500 men, this would be all we should have to meet the deficiency of 22,500. Extreme difficulty would be experienced in times of emergency in obtaining the necessary number of men in the engineers' department. And we must not forget the 5,000 additional officers and men who would be required in 1896 to man the new vessels commenced last year. He thought he had said enough to show that, in order to provide for our requirements in the present year and the immediate future, it was absolutely necessary that a very considerable increase should be made both in the number of active service officers and men, and in the Royal Naval Reserve. He had considered this question very carefully, and his opinion was that the very least increase which would meet our requirements during the present year and the immediate future must be 6,800 active service officers and men in addition to the so-called automatic increase of 1,600 young ordinary seamen who were our boys a few months ago serving in ships, but had now, having reached 18, obtained their rating of ordinary seamen. Of the increase of 6,800 active service men 3,500 should be in the engineers' department, and an increase of 3,000 in that most valuable corps—the Marines. By this addition to the corps of Royal Marines we should get a large number of trained gunners in half the time and at half the cost of obtaining them in any other way. The cost of a Marine's training during 14 months while he was passing through was £48 against £102, the cost of a boy for two and a-half years before he became an ordinary seaman at 18. With regard to the present strength of the Royal Naval Reserve, the first-class numbered, approximately, 10,700; the second-class, 10,600; and the stokers about 1,200. The first-class were a most valuable body of men; they were employed in our large vessels of the Mercantile Marine, and were more suitable for service in the Fleet than were the second class, who were ordinary seamen—principally fishermen. It was most desirable that the number of the first-class should be gradually increased up to 14,000, the second-class up to 11,000, and the stokers up to 3,000, giving a total reserve of 28,000 men, as compared with 22,500 at present. This would give the country a really efficient Naval Reserve. The increase in *personnel* provided for in the Navy Estimates comprised 6,700 active service officers and men and 400 Royal Naval Reserve men; but the details of this increase when examined were not so satisfactory as they appeared to be. The existing deficiency in the engineers' department exceeded 6,000, and therefore the addition of 2,800 would still leave a large deficiency. There was also an increase of 500 Marines, but that was, in his opinion, far too small. There was what was called an automatic increase of 1,600 young ordinary seamen; but, as a matter of fact, these were a few months ago boys who, having now reached the age of 18, had become ordinary seamen. He did not see how this could be treated as a numerical increase of 1,600 in the *personnel*. It was further proposed to take 800 seamen from the Merchant Service and to send them direct to our sea-going ships; but this was not in time of peace a desirable transfer. The men had not been accustomed to the discipline of the Navy; they had not received instruction in gunnery and torpedo work; they were not accustomed to the duties they would have to perform in our sea-going ships, and it would be a very unwise thing to send them to those ships. If the men could be induced to leave the Merchant Service, and if it was finally decided to take them, the better course would be to send them for six months to our naval barracks, where they would get the instruction they needed to fit them for service in the Fleet. He had endeavoured to set forth the smallest increase in the active service men and in Royal Naval Reserve that would meet our requirements for the present and the immediate future. The number both in *matériel* and *personnel* in the Navy provided for by the Estimates fell far short of his recommendations. The command of the sea was not a Party question, but was one of the highest national and Imperial importance, and one on which the very existence of the Empire as a first-class Power must depend in time of war. He had carefully considered all the facts and figures, and the conclusion he had arrived at was that the provision made in the Estimates was not sufficient to ensure to this country the command of the sea in time of war, and was, therefore, inadequate for the protection of the vast interests of the British Empire.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he would, with the permission of the House, at once ask the First Lord of the Admiralty the question of which he had given notice as to the cost of the proposed dock at Gibraltar; and what proportion of the work was intended to be executed during the current year? He said, there was but little for him to add to the speech of the noble and gallant Lord, whose authority on the subject was very great, for not only had he distinguished himself afloat, but he had had experience for many years as First Sea Lord of the Admiralty. The noble Lord had laid before them facts which demanded attention, and which ought to sink deeply into the minds of the noble Earl opposite and of all Englishmen. He was glad the noble Lord had dwelt so strongly on the importance of increasing the number of battleships. After all, the proportion of our cruisers to our merchant vessels was far less than that in Foreign Navies. More battleships were required, because the result of future naval contests must depend on the number of that force employed. The conditions of naval warfare had been entirely altered. Formerly, a shot might kill a few men, disable a gun, or destroy a mast, but now, as we unfortunately knew from collisions between our own ships, a blow from one ironclad might send to the bottom at once another, with her armament and crew. We must always remember Napoleon's axiom about possessing "*les grands bataillons*," and that the only way to provide for such losses was to have a large reserve ready to take the place of vessels sunk by accident or by such a blow as he had described. The French Government, in the event of war, could lay their hands on 170,000 men more or less trained; but we had no such resource. As to the subject of his question, we were about to spend from £300,000 to £400,000 on a dock at Gibraltar, which had long been declared to be an absolute necessity; but the Estimates provided only a paltry £1,000, which would only lengthen the mole by a few yards. Far less would it construct a dock. He hoped the noble Earl would be able to give a satisfactory answer to the question which stood in his name.

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Earl SPENCER): I am sure your Lordships always listen with pleasure to the remarks on the Navy of the noble and gallant Lords who have just addressed us. Lord Hood has a wide experience at the Admiralty, and what falls from him must command attention. I do not think it necessary on the present occasion to make a general statement as to the necessity of maintaining our Navy in a condition to command the sea, because that has been repeated over and over again, both in this House and in another place. Only this I will say: that in both political Parties in this country there is practical unanimity that it is essential we should maintain a Fleet so strong and powerful at sea that we may be independent of all nations whatsoever. Having said that, I must claim on the part of Her Majesty's Government and of the Admiralty that we are as anxious to carry that policy out as the noble and gallant Lord who has been finding fault with us in such severe terms. I am glad to find, at all events, that the noble and gallant Lord has retreated from opinions which he formerly held, when he stated — in 1888, I think—that very little indeed was required to make our Navy efficient. Since then we know he took part in the Naval Defence Act of the late Government. Notwithstanding the criticisms of the noble and gallant Lord, I maintain that the scheme which Her Majesty's Government have put forward is one which will meet the requirements of the country fully and satisfactorily. I quite admit that we are not following the lines of the late Government by propounding at the outset the whole scheme, and tying the Government down to it by an Act of Parliament. We deliberately declined to follow that precedent. There are various reasons why we took that view—some Constitutional reasons and others as to the grave inconvenience which has occurred owing to the binding terms of the Naval Defence Act. In some respects the Naval Defence Act has worked well, but in others it has hampered and tied the hands of the officials to such an extent that it is one of the most laborious Acts to carry out, and we are indisposed, even if we had not graver and weightier objections to it, to bind ourselves down by another Naval Defence Act. At the same time, I quite admit that in looking at this matter it is impossible to confine our view to one, or two, or three years. We have prepared and approved a scheme extending over five years, but we think it most desirable not to announce beforehand what the expenditure and what the shipbuilding will be for succeeding years; and to that policy I sincerely trust we shall adhere most rigidly. If you proclaim in an Act of Parliament the whole programme of shipbuilding you are going to carry out in five years, you make a stupendous list of ships and you draw the attention of everyone to the enormous expenditure you are going to incur with regard to ships. I conceive that the effect of this in the past has been to bring about the very state of things to which the noble and gallant Lord referred—namely, the great increase of late years in the shipbuilding of foreign nations. I maintain the proper policy is to frame your whole scheme and year after year to produce it to Parliament. A scheme of five years will be produced and known to the country in the first three years, for in the first three years you must lay down all the ships, or very nearly all the ships—there may be some torpedo and other smaller vessels not included—you intend to build in the five years. I maintain that our scheme, which I am not going to be drawn by the noble and gallant Lord to divulge, will be amply sufficient, alike with regard to battleships and cruisers and torpedo-boat destroyers, to meet the requirements of the country. It would be impossible to carry out and give orders for the whole programme in one year. Nor is it desirable. At the present moment, if we compare our naval strength with that of foreign nations, we should find that we stand exceedingly well in regard to battleships and cruisers, but that there are other branches of the Fleet where we do not stand so well. We therefore conceive that it is necessary to develop the scheme gradually, and by the time that other countries have the new ships they are building completed, we shall have the ships completed that we have in hand and propose to build in the next five years. It must always be remembered that this country by its skill in naval construction is able not only to build ships at a cheaper rate, as we believe, than foreign nations, but with much greater rapidity. The *Royal Sovereign* was built in the short space of two years and eight months, a very remarkable performance and one that does infinite credit to the construction department of the Admiralty and to the dockyards, where the building of these ships is carried out. We believe, however, that even without the Naval Defence Act we shall almost rival that record in some of the ships we are now building. But that greater rapidity of building is of importance in considering what it is necessary to lay down at the outset of a programme. I admit that if we see foreign nations rapidly increasing their shipbuilding we may have to increase our programme, but I sincerely hope that will not be the case, and there are indications already that almost the reverse may take place. Another advantage gained in not laying down at the beginning your whole programme is this: that any improvements that are made in the formation of ships, or in the disposition of the armour or guns, can be adapted much more readily if you are not tied down by a Naval Defence Act. I quite admit that even in that Act there were certain means taken to alter the ships; at the same time, the whole arrangements in the clauses of that Act were so complicated that they materially increased the difficulty of adapting, or changing the designs. The noble and gallant Lord says we have not laid down a sufficient number of battleships, and that we ought to have ten. At the present moment, subject to any increase of shipbuilding operations abroad, we have ordered seven. I maintain that, taking the test which the noble has himself taken, that number is sufficient for our present needs. I am forced by the speech of the noble and gallant Lord, though I always regret to do so, to compare the strength of the Navy with that of the two countries to which he has referred. With regard to first-class battleships, which the noble and gallant Lord said are our most important ships of war in case of an emergency, I find that we have now built and building 22, the French have 18, and Russia 10. That will leave first-class battleships in a deficiency of six at the end of 1898-99. But now I come to another test, which always presents a difficulty—and that is the test of taking second- or third-class battleships and coast-defence ships. That is a most complicated and difficult question. There is always a dispute as to the classification of particular ships. In a recent article in *The Quarterly Review*—and certain expressions of the noble and gallant Lord led me to think he has read it—there is an example of how strange classification may be. In that article the reviewer attributed 17 cruisers to Russia, while, according to our Return, Russia has not more than five. No doubt the writer in *The Quarterly Review* brought into his calculation certain smaller vessels, perhaps of 1,200 tons, and others. I have looked through the article, and I find the writer is only able to get his figure 17 in that way—a figure which certainly looks very well for his argument. The same article refers to armoured vessels, and gives us an inferiority. Our first-class armoured cruisers are given at 18. In that catalogue the reviewer leaves out altogether all the first-class new cruisers under the Naval Defence Act. I quite understand what may be said on that subject. I think the noble and gallant Lord himself was responsible for the way in which these armoured cruisers were protected by the protective deck instead of side armour. We at the Admiralty, certainly my advisers, all declare that these ships of the *Royal Arthur* and *Edgar* class are quite as powerful with their protective decks, and in some respects more powerful than some of those armoured cruisers to which the article refers. I have given those two examples to show how very difficult it is to come to any common ground of agreement with regard to those ships, for classification opens out endless disputes. With regard to the classification of the three classes of battleships, built and building, if we take into account the vessels now classed in the new Return as first-class cruisers—and we may well do so if we compare them with some of the ships of our neighbours—we bring out the number of seven to which the noble and gallant Lord refers. Then, with regard to the coast-defence vessels, the noble and gallant Lord compared our numbers with the numbers of foreign nations. With regard to that, we have never thought it a desirable policy to build special coast defence vessels. We have thought that there would always be vessels which could no longer be classed in the first or second or even in the third class, but which would be available and very efficient to take the position of coast-defence vessels. That is the policy of the Admiralty, and it is, I believe, right and just. Taking all these matters into account, I must assure the House and the noble and gallant Lord that, fully sharing his view that we are bound to keep our battleships in sufficient strength, we believe that, at the present moment, the seven first-class battleships which we have ordered will be amply sufficient to meet the requirements of the country. Now, my Lords, with regard to our cruisers I am not quite sure that he was perfectly satisfied on that point—or perhaps it was the noble and gallant Lord who succeeded him. He justly dwelt on the enormous extent of our Mercantile Marine, and I think everybody must feel the vast importance of our great Mercantile Marine in every part of the world. I freely admit that this enormous marine requires greater protection than the marine of other nations. At the same time, I cannot agree to the doctrine that we must have cruisers in exact proportion to the number of our merchant ships. What we do want is to have a sufficient fleet of battleships and cruisers to deal with the fleet of any enemy opposed to us. That is the way in which we must properly meet the difficulty. In war we must attack our enemies wherever we can find them, and if we can keep them in check and destroy their battleships and cruisers then there will be, practically, safety for our merchant vessels throughout the world. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. I quite admit that the increase in the number of our cruisers is necessary, and we have begun already in our programme by entering into contracts for six second-class cruisers, which will be very nearly equal to the first-class cruisers of the *Edgar* class. I am very glad to find that the noble and gallant Lord is in favour of increasing the number of our torpedo-boat destroyers. Certainly I gathered from speeches in another place that that part of our policy was very considerably criticised by very distinguished persons who sat at the Admiralty with the noble and gallant Lord. I confess I attach the very greatest importance to the development of what is called our torpedo flotilla. There is nothing, to my mind, more important than that, and I have, I confess, always been rather surprised at the hostile criticisms which were made upon the present Government for perhaps having gone a little further than they ought to have done, according to the Estimates they have laid before Parliament, in order to effect this great object. The noble and gallant Lord said we had been dilatory in the past year. I deny that entirely. When the late Government went out of Office, a Minute was left which said that the late Board of Admiralty did not consider it wise to carry out strictly the programme of new shipbuilding in 1892-93. They thought it was desirable to concentrate their efforts on the completion of the Naval Defence Act ships and to defer, at all events till towards the end of the year, the laying down of the new ships. The present Government and the present Board of Admiralty have followed out that policy. They thought it was of far greater importance promptly and rapidly to complete the ships of the Naval Defence Act than to begin at that time with new warships. We, therefore, were merely carrying out the spirit of the proposals of the late Board by deferring the commencement of these vessels. With regard to the further delay which took place, I do not think we can be charged with dilatoriness last year with regard to the new construction in the dockyards. With regard to the Naval Defence Act ships, we spent somewhat more than we put in the Estimates. In regard to the further programme of new construction in the dockyards, we spent £447,511, as against the Estimate of £433,430. I have thought it right to read these figures because the present Board feel it rather hard upon them that they have been accused of wasting time in laying down ships and in not carrying out even the modest programme which they had last year. With regard to the other matters to which the noble and gallant Lord has referred, I still maintain that there were sound and good reasons for not hurrying forward the laying down of these ships. When that terrible disaster, the loss of the *Victoria*, took place, it was impossible to be certain to what cause the loss of that ship would be laid. We thought it was quite possible that the whole principle of naval architecture and construction might be impugned, and we thought it would be most imprudent if we did not wait until we had an authoritative statement and considered most thoroughly the import of that great disaster. I maintain that that was a thoroughly sound and legitimate decision of the Government, and nothing that the noble and gallant Lord or others have said on that subject has shaken me in the belief that we did perfectly right in not hurrying on the construction of the *Majestic* and the *Magnificent* until we knew the result of the inquiry into that disaster. Now, my Lords, I will come to what the noble and gallant Lord has said with regard to the manning. The present Board admit that nothing can be more important than the sufficient manning and officering of the Navy. We heard in old days that there were ships without guns, and the Admiralty of the day was much attacked for it. We should be blameable if we had ships without men as former Boards were blameable for having ships without guns. Now, I claim that, although there have been and are difficulties with regard to the officering and manning of the Navy, we are taking the right steps to obtain a sufficient number of men for every branch of the Service. What the noble and gallant Lord said with regard to the numbers required for manning our War Fleet in the future was entirely conjectural.

Lord HOOD of AVALON stated that the number he gave, 91,000 men, would be found by the noble Earl to be correct according to the Admiralty Returns.

*Earl SPENCER: I maintain my position that the opinion of the noble and gallant Lord is conjecture; and I shall certainly not add to the conjecture of the noble and gallant Lord by making any representation on the part of the Admiralty as to the number of men that would be required for manning our warships in the future. But I will tell your Lordships what the Admiralty have done. It is not the work of the present Government; it is the work we found in operation when we came into Office, and we took it up. A very influential Committee was appointed for the consideration of the manning of the Navy. Its Reports are made in the strictest confidence, and it would be iniquitous on my part to divulge what is contained in those confidential Reports for the use of the Admiralty. That Committee is still sitting, and we are acting strictly in conformity with the recommendations of the Manning Committee. We believe that the steps we are taking will in a short time provide the necessary men for manning our Fleet in time of war. We have this year taken means to considerably increase the number of our men. I was not quite sure when the noble and gallant Lord said we required 6,800 officers and men to complete our strength whether that was in addition to the new number for which we are asking this year or whether it includes that number. At all events, the number we are asking for is 6,700, and of these a very large number are stokers and engine-room artificers. We ask for 2,445 additional stokers, besides engine-room artificers. I believe that we could not have safely asked for more. It is a very large increase, and I gather from speeches in another place, to which I listened with great interest, that those who had been colleagues of the noble and gallant Lord thought we had been liberal in our proceedings with regard to what we asked for on the subject of manning. Certainly I heard my predecessor in Office say so myself. The noble and gallant Lord criticised us for having asked for 800 men to be entered from outside our own training ships. Our asking for 800 men outside our own training ships does not mean in the slightest degree that we disparage or undervalue the great merit of the men trained in our training ships. They are, I believe, as good men as can possibly be found, and I do not believe that there is any country in the world that has any sailors or bluejackets equal to the men we turn out from our training ships. But we consider that we are short of that complement of trained men required to man our ships in time of war in conjunction with our Naval Reserve. We thought it was desirable, therefore, to try this experiment of getting men from the outside. I have not asked the question of my naval advisers, but I feel certain it was never their intention that these men should be started off to the Mediterranean or other stations abroad the moment they were enlisted, but that they should be sent to the depôts—the very thing to which the noble and gallant Lord refers. I attach very great importance to the Royal Naval Reserve, and we claim that we are doing a great deal this year to increase the efficiency of that force. We are inviting more officers than we have done before to take part in the training in our ships, and we ask for 50 more lieutenants and 50 sub-lieutenants. We have increased the number who may serve on board ships for 12 months' training. We are also, which is a perfectly new thing, giving six months' training afloat to 700 men of the Naval Reserve. We consider this to be of the highest importance, because without that training such as men-of-war afford we know that the men of the Royal Naval Reserve, however good they may be, would not be equal to the men we have trained ourselves. We have therefore held out inducements for them to train in this way. We are not able at this time to say how far the experiment will be successful, but I assure your Lordships that we will do everything we can to make it successful and arrange that those men should receive this additional training. I come now to a point which has been referred to by the noble Viscount, and as to which a question has been placed on the Paper. He very kindly at my request made his reference to the question after the speech of the noble and gallant Lord, as I thought it would save your Lordships' time if I made my reply to both together. Now, my Lords, I attach the utmost importance to the question of public works. We have our new ships of greater size and weight than any ships that have existed before. We have a new naval attack in case of war—the torpedo attack—and that devolves upon us immense responsibilities with regard to our ships in time of war. We know now that we must have protected anchorages for them, in order that they may lie safely at night, unless we are able by our torpedo-boat destroyers to close the ports from which the torpedo boats issue to attack us, therefore, this year we made a great effort to get Parliament to affirm the principle of certain necessary works. We have very nearly doubled the Vote which was taken for works last year, and which has been taken for works in previous years. We require larger docks, and we need to dredge out our harbours for the safe anchorage of men-of-war. We also require protection against torpedoes by moles, and other forms of protection as well. In order to meet this requirement we have made great efforts to get the sanction of Parliament. The case of Gibraltar has been mentioned. I attach the utmost importance to the dock at Gibraltar. Though nothing was done with regard to it upon the Committee's Report which was made some time ago, I know that something was done with regard to the mole. We think, however, that what was ordered then is wholly insufficient, and we have therefore obtained this year the sanction of Parliament not only to lengthen the mole at Gibraltar by two stretches, which will make it a considerable length, but we have also obtained the sanction of Parliament to a Vote for expenditure upon the dock. Noble Lords cheered the attacks which were made on the Government with regard to the smallness of the Vote. But it is impossible until a Vote has been sanctioned by Parliament to take any steps whatever with regard to the carrying out of a plan for a perfectly new work. The plans for great works are very costly, and therefore no Government will undertake to forestall a decision of Parliament as to cost with regard to the preparation of works and the plans for those works. Time after time the Government have taken money in the Estimates for those Votes, and time after time it has been found impossible, especially in the first year, to expend the money asked for. This has been made a matter of serious comment by the Controller and Auditor General, and the Admiralty have been much criticised with regard to it. We have not thought it right this year to take more money than we thought we could actually spend, but we thought it was of the utmost importance to get the principle affirmed. Once the principle is affirmed, then we can push on with the works, and there would be no difficulty in getting the money. If money is saved on one estimate it can, with the sanction of the Treasury, be expended on works. It was said in another place that to get £5 voted for works is important, because it establishes the principle. With regard to the enormous Keyham works, we did not think it right to take more than would actually affirm the principle and enable us to make preparations to commence the work. The same thing may be said with regard to Gibraltar dock, though we are pressing forward the mole. It is almost impossible to lay out a large sum the first year owing to the preliminary preparations that have to be made; but I assure your Lordships that I greatly value those works at Gibraltar, particularly the dock and the extension of the mole. If the Government remains in Office we shall push forward the works to the utmost of our power; but your Lordships must not judge that the sum we ask for this year is the measure of what we intend to do with regard to pressing on those works in the future. I assure the House that it is the Government's anxious desire to maintain the Navy in a condition that will sustain our supremacy on the seas, and we believe that the programme we have prepared, of which this year's estimate is the beginning, will be amply sufficient for the purpose.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, the noble Earl had not answered the question as to what proportion of the work was to be executed during the present year.

*EARL SPENCER said, that in all their preparations they should push it forward as far as they could. They doubted if they would be able to do more than that in the present year.

LORD DE MAULEY thought that the noble Lord who introduced this question had sounded a note of alarm which should re-echo through the country. No doubt they were in a state of jeopardy. Armaments were springing up in all directions, far in excess of the requirements of commerce, which, if not a menace, might become a source of danger. The Navies of the present day were different from those they encountered when they held a superiority both in numbers and efficiency. The French fleet in the impregnable harbour of Toulon was fully equipped for action. They might attack an English fleet, probably, as usual, unprepared. They might choose their own time for doing so. Before many years had elapsed there would be a canal to connect the Mediterranean with the northern portion of their Kingdom. Their fleet, withdrawn from the south, might appear upon our coasts. The prospect was simply appalling. We might be hit right or left, at the convenience of an enemy. The canal was a geographical difficulty we were unable to surmount; but was the Navy such as could be relied upon to cope with the danger? It appeared to be doubtful. Some few months past we read an account of one of our monster ships well nigh unmanageable in a gale of wind; it certainly would have been at the mercy of an enemy in a more navigable vessel. The catastrophe which caused the loss of that most excellent officer Sir George Tryon taught that these unwieldy ships would not bear collision; they were forced upon their beam ends, the weight of their armour pressed them down, they shipped a sea, and sunk. They appeared to have no recovering power. It was possible that Sir George Tryon, in practising the gridiron manœuvre, was thinking of the Dardanelles, a not unlikely spot for an encounter between the allied fleets of Russia and France against our own. The width of the strait would only admit of the turning of one of these unwieldy monsters, and if an accident occurred in what was nothing more than a naval review, the confusion of actual conflict might be imagined. It appeared to be doubtful whether those ships were not more objects of admiration than of use. The destruction of our fleet would be the loss of Egypt, and a peril to our Indian Empire. A Committee should be at once appointed to report upon the state of the Navy, not composed of experts who naturally were enamoured of these works of art, nor yet of yacht-builders, who he admitted were the most scientific class of the day. They did not require a racing Navy, but one to stand the wear and tear of service; but the Committee should be composed of practical seamen, men who might be called upon to serve in these very ships and be responsible for their safety, who from experience in the duties of their profession would be better able than theorists to satisfy the public mind as to the value of our ironclad Navy.

[The subject then dropped.]

## POST OFFICE (EMPLOYMENT OF RESERVED SOLDIERS).

### MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Lord **WANTAGE** moved for the following Return:—

"The number of soldiers in the Reserve, or time-expired, who have been engaged in outdoor employments under the Post Office Authorities since January, 1892, distinguishing the Reserve from the time-expired; the number of men, other than soldiers or pensioners, who have been engaged in similar positions during the same period; the number of soldiers who have been dismissed from their positions during that period from the General Post Office service; the number of civilians also dismissed; and that particulars of the first three paragraphs should distinguish the soldiers and time-expired men who have been officially recommended to the General Post Office by officers in charge of registries, or by the 'National Association for the Employment of Reserve Soldiers.'"

He said, he was anxious to ascertain the number of soldiers employed as postmen. Since he had put down the notice, he said some information had been given in another place with regard to the subject. He learnt that during the first quarter of the present year 59 Reservists had been appointed as postmen, but during the same period 432 civilians had been appointed to similar posts. It struck him that this proportion was singularly inadequate when they considered how exceptionally fitted Army men were to fill these posts. Out of 16,000 men who were annually sent to the Reserve they had, as it seemed to him, the very insufficient number of 240 employed in the post offices. The proportion which soldiers bore to civilians in the Post Office was 12 per cent. The Return he asked for would extend the information further than was stated in the House of Commons. He had asked for the figures for the previous two years to be given by quarters. He was very the desire of the Department to promote the employment of soldiers. If the noble Lord would confine his Return as to the temporary employment of soldiers to London he could get all the information he wanted at once, with the exception of the reply to paragraph 5, in which he asked—

> "Returns 1, 2, and 3 should distinguish the soldiers and time-expired men who have been officially recommended to the General Post Office by officers in charge of registries, or by the 'National Association for the Employment of Reserve Soldiers.'"

There were none such, therefore the Return could not be given. It was the essence of the scheme that soldiers who entered the Post Office should have been recommended by the Military Authorities—never by private Associations. Private Associations could not give the responsible characters which were considered necessary. Then, the noble Lord asked them to distinguish the Reserve men from the time-expired men. The Post Office had no knowledge on the point, but possibly the War Office, with which he had been in communication, would be able to afford the required information.

**Lord ASHBOURNE** said, there was one question arising out of the clear statement of the noble Lord which he would like to ask. The noble Lord said that a modification was made in giving preferential treatment and consideration to the claims of telegraph boys who had grown up and had rather passed beyond the telegraph sphere of work in selecting them for postmen in preference to soldiers. He (Lord Ashbourne) gathered that that was not confined to telegraph boys then in existence but was to go on?

**Lord PLAYFAIR**; Yes.

**Lord ASHBOURNE** asked if the noble Lord had considered whether the supply of telegraph boys would not feed all the vacant appointments, leaving nothing for the soldiers?

***Lord PLAYFAIR** said, that no doubt it would diminish the number of appointments available for soldiers, but it would not nearly meet the demands of the Post Office. The noble Lord would see that these ex-telegraph boys, with the training they had received, became very valuable as postmen.

**Lord ASHBOURNE**: No question of it.

*Lord Playfair*

**Lord PLAYFAIR** said, it would be undesirable not to give preference to these boys where their conduct had been good.

**Lord ASHBOURNE** said, he only wanted the assurance that, after recognising these claims, there would still be a substantial margin for the employment of soldiers and sailors.

**Lord WANTAGE** said, that what he was apprehensive of was that, in addition to the telegraph messengers under the order of the Postmaster General, civilians who had been temporarily employed by a post office would have precedence of soldiers in permanent employment. He was apprehensive that the terms of this Order were so elastic that local postmasters would interpret it to the disadvantage of soldiers, and would put civilians over their heads, after employing them, say, for six months at the post office. He was, therefore, anxious for a Return which would show the men who were employed as auxiliaries in the country as well as in London. He could not think that the preparation of such a Return would involve a large amount of trouble. The work would be purely clerical. A Circular Letter could be sent out to provincial postmasters asking for information as to how many soldiers were employed. The sending out of such a Circular would have this advantage—it would draw the attention of the local postmasters to the fact that it was the wish of the Postmaster General that postmasters should employ soldiers whenever they could do so. Many postmasters, he believed, were not aware of this wish. They found it convenient to put persons for six months or so into their post offices to learn the business and then to appoint them permanently, and so shut out soldiers altogether. The National Association established in Buckingham Street, and which had done so much good, was, perhaps, better able to vouch for the characters of the men than the officers of the regimental districts, because the Association took charge of them, and followed up each man's career. He hoped, therefore, the Post Office would recognise the characters given by that Association.

**Lord PLAYFAIR** said, he would put himself into communication with the the Post Office on the question.

**The LORD CHANCELLOR** (Lord Herschell): Perhaps the noble Lord will withdraw the Motion in the form in which he moved it?

**Lord WANTAGE**: Yes.

Motion (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL.

(No. 32.)

House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read $3^a$ To-morrow.

### TRUSTEE ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL.

(No. 38.)

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read $3^a$ To-morrow.

### QUARTER SESSIONS BILL [H.L.].

(No. 48.)

Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to, with Amendments; and Bill returned to the Commons.

### TROUT FISHING (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Acts of the 8th and 9th years of Victoria, chapter 26, and of the 23rd and 24th years of Victoria, chapter 45, relating to fishing for trout or other fresh water fish by nets in the rivers and waters of Scotland, and to make provision for a close time—Was presented by the Lord Lamington; read $1^a$; to be printed; and to be read $2^a$ on Thursday next. (No. 49.)

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 5) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Clonmell and Moss Side (Collier Marr)—Was presented by the Lord Playfair; read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 50.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, 7th May 1894.*

### SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

### SCOTLAND.

Sir J. Mowbray reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Fifteen Members to the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Bills, introduced by a Minister of the Crown, relating exclusively to Scotland, which may by Order of the House be committed to such Standing Committee:—Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Gerald Balfour, Mr. Cayzer, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Lord Elcho, Sir James Fergusson, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Jeffreys, Mr. Seton-Karr, Mr. Walter Long, Mr. J. W. Lowther, Mr. Muntz, Sir Stafford Northcote, and Mr. Power.

Report to lie upon the Table.

### SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

### LAW, &c.

Sir J. Mowbray further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Boulnois; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Richard Webster and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.

Sir J. Mowbray further reported from the Committee; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure the following Fifteen Members, in respect of the Church Patronage Bill:—Mr. Birrell, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Caine, Viscount Cranborne, Mr. Dodd, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. Paul, Mr. Perks, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Bowen Rowlands, Mr. Talbot, Mr. Carvell Williams, and Viscount Wolmer.

Report to lie upon the Table.

### SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

### TRADE, &c.

Sir J. Mowbray further reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Sir Richard Webster and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Boulnois.

Report to lie upon the Table.

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to regulate the conditions as to Leave of Absence for certain Colonial Officers." [Colonial Officers (Leave of Absence) Bill [*Lords.*]

## *QUESTIONS.*

### NAVAL NOMENCLATURE.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty who is responsible for the naming of Her Majesty's ships; and if, having regard to the territorial system in the Army, designed to encourage local interest in regiments, the Board of Admiralty will consider the desirability of resorting to the designations of British, Irish, Colonial, and Indian countries, counties, and cities, or to the names of British victories, and the officers by whom they have been won, in substitution for such mythological and classical names as *Melpomene*, *Iphigenia*, *Polyphemus*, *Andromache*, *Terpsichore*, and others?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Board of Admiralty are responsible for the naming of Her Majesty's ships. They have been desirous of perpetuating, as far as possible, time-honoured names which are associated with the Naval History of this country. They will continue this practice, but, without adopting any territorial system such as exists in the Army, will consider the advisability of introducing from time to time other names of national interest.

### CATTLE WEIGHBRIDGES IN IRELAND.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a firm of weighbridge makers exhibited at the recent Royal Dublin Society's Show at Ball's Bridge a cattle weighbridge, fitted with a dial and automatic indicator, with a view to its adoption by Fair and Market Authorities throughout Ireland; is he aware that the smallest division represents 14 lbs., and that the machine, therefore, is unsuited for the weighing of pigs and sheep; also, that there is no balance ball attached to the dial apparatus having a screw with revolving ball, enabling the weigh table to be readily and easily cleansed and balanced, so that the droppings of animals weighed may not be weighed in with the succeeding animal; is he aware that the Inspectors of Weights and Measures cannot apply the test for sensitiveness to these dials—namely, No. 55 of the Model Regulations, 1890, and that the water in the cistern that regulates the back weight within the cistern varies in weight through change of temperature, and that no sworn weigher will certify the weight from a dial machine; and whether he has caused inquiry to be made into the matter, and with what result?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Land Commissioners inform me that, having made inquiry, it does not appear that the particular machine referred to was specially exhibited with a view to its adoption by Market Authorities in Ireland. The Commissioners have not been applied to by any Market Authority to sanction, nor have they in any way indicated to any such Authority their preference for, the machine in question.

### FALKIRK MARKET.

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is aware that at the Falkirk Tryst or Market, in Stirlingshire, Scotland, where upwards of 1,000 head of Irish cattle will, after payment of 6d. a head for market toll, be exposed for sale on the second Tuesday of August, the only cattle-weighing machine within the area of the market is an ordinary cart weighbridge, 72 inches by 42 inches, with an iron fence round the platform, a machine too small to weigh Irish bullocks measuring eight feet in length; if he is not satisfied with the accommodation for weighing, including the want of pens for holding cattle prior to being weighed, will he bring the case under the notice of the Lord Advocate, in order that he may instruct the Procurator Fiscal to take proceedings to compel the owner of the Tryst ground to supply a suitable weighbridge, with pens for holding stock, in time for the great market in August; and can any person put in force the provisions of Section 6 of "The Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Act, 1887"?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): The Market Authority of every market or fair in which tolls are authorised to be taken is bound to maintain to the satisfaction of the Board of Agriculture sufficient and suitable accommodation for weighing cattle, unless specially exempted by Order of the Board. The question of the hon. Member is the first suggestion which has reached me that the law has not been complied with in the case of the market to which he refers, and I will at once cause inquiry to be made into the matter and communicate the result to the hon. Member. So far as I am aware, there is nothing to prevent any person aggrieved from instituting proceedings under Section 6 of the Act of 1887.

## LOCH RYAN OYSTER FISHERY.

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Scottish Fishery Board have issued, or are about to issue, an Order establishing Loch Ryan as a several oyster fishery; and, if so, whether the Order will be so framed as to safeguard the interests of line fishermen who depend upon the foreshores of the said loch for their supply of bait?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Fishery Board that a Memorial has been received from Mr. Wallace, praying for the grant of an Order for an oyster fishery in Loch Ryan, and that a Draft Order has been advertised and circulated in accordance with the Board's Regulations. An inquiry has recently been held with reference to the matter at Stranraer by an Inspector appointed by the Board, but his Report has not yet been considered by them. At this inquiry all parties wishing to be heard for their interest were afforded an opportunity of giving evidence. I may point out that, should the Board decide to make an Order, it would have to be subject to my approval, and, if approved, Parliament would subsequently have an opportunity of considering it when introduced in the form of a Provisional Order Bill. With reference to the interests of all parties concerned, I will carefully consider the terms of any Order which may be submitted to me by the Fishery Board.

## MEHDI HASSAN'S ACTION FOR DEFAMATION IN INDIA.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in an action for defamation brought before a British Court by Mehdi Hassan, the Home Secretary of the Hyderabad State, against the alleged printer of an anonymous pamphlet assailing the character of his English wife, the Court, by an error of procedure, allowed evidence to be led in support of the plea of justification, before deciding the preliminary question as to the publication of the pamphlet by the accused; and that the case was eventually dismissed, on the technical ground of non-proof of publication, without any finding as to the truth of the evidence in support of the plea of justification; whether he is aware that Mehdi Hassan was first suspended from his post as Home Secretary while the case was *sub judice*, and then dismissed therefrom without reason assigned, after his case had been decided; whether he is aware that Mehdi Hassan, who is a Civil servant of the Government of India lent to the Hyderabad State, has applied to be re-employed by the Indian Government under the ordinary Civil Service Rules, and that the Government of India have refused his application on account of the nature of the evidence given at the trial of the action in question, and of the circumstances under which his employment in Hyderabad terminated; and that he has been ordered to send in his resignation within two months from 31st March last on pain of dismissal; whether there is any precedent for thus dismissing an Indian Civil servant on the ground of evidence which had been admitted in error by a Court of Law, and the truth of which had consequently not been tested or established by any judicial finding; and whether he will inquire into this matter, and take steps to secure that no injustice is done to Mehdi Hassan?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): (1) I am aware that the action for defamation referred to in the question was dismissed on technical grounds, without any finding on the plea of justification, but I am not aware that there was any error of procedure; (2) Mehdi Hassan was suspended from his office by order of the Nizam on the 21st of October, 1892, and the reasons for such suspension were published in *The Hyderabad Gazette.* (3) (4) I have received no information as to any application by Mehdi Hassan for re-employment in the British service. The whole subject, having been brought before my predecessor, Lord Kimberley, by the hon. Member, was carefully considered by him, and referred to the Government of India, who have reported upon it. Lord Kimberley offered to lay Papers before the House if the hon. Member would move for them, and that offer, which has since been repeated by myself, is still open if the hon. Member desires to avail himself of it.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will inquire with regard to the specific matters raised in paragraphs 3 and 4, which have taken place since the matter was referred to Lord Kimberley—namely, the application for re-employment and the grounds stated for its refusal?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I have no objection to inquire into the matter.

### THE EDUCATION CODE.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, in consequence of the changes in the Education Code of the present year, and as some time must elapse before books and tables adapted thereto can be placed in the hands of pupils, the date at which examinations began can be postponed to a date subsequent to that at present fixed—namely, the 10th of this month?

SIR G. TREVELYAN (who replied) said: The changes introduced into the examinations are inconsiderable; but instructions will be given that due allowance and indulgence shall be made until the end of this year, in view of these changes.

### LUNACY IN SCOTLAND.

MR. J. REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, with regard to the fact that the number of insane persons under official cognisance in Scotland has increased from 6,341 in 1862 to 13,058 in 1892, whether the increase is believed to be real or only apparent; and whether he has called, or intends to call, for a special Report on this subject similar to that called for by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: This question has been repeatedly discussed with much care and fulness in the Annual Reports of the General Board of Lunacy, more particularly in the 26th, 29th, and 34th. But I shall be glad to call for a special Report on the subject for the information of Parliament.

### HORSE BREEDING IN KERRY.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what provision has been made by the Congested Districts Board in connection with the improvement of horse-breeding in South Kerry?

MR. J. MORLEY: Three of the Board's stallions are stationed in Kerry,—namely, at Dingle, Kenmare, and Cahirciveen. There is also a fourth stallion at Bantry, in Cork, which is within a short distance of Kerry.

### LUNATICS IN IRELAND.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Special Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics in Ireland, whether he is aware that in several of the Reports supplied by the Resident Medical Superintendents of asylums the use of inferior tea is mentioned as one of the sources of the causation of insanity; whether his attention has been called to the Report from No. 16 district, in which it is stated that the tea used is simply a decoction of tannin; whether any steps can be taken to protect the public from such an injurious article; and whether it would be convenient to give a list of the contract prices for tea supplied to the different district asylums in Ireland for the years 1893 and 1894?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am aware of the statements referred to in the first and second paragraphs, though I may add that many of the Resident Medical Superintendents attribute the deleterious influence of tea, not to its quality, but to the method of preparation adopted. With regard to the second paragraph, the purchaser of adulterated tea may, at his own expense, proceed summarily against the seller for the penalty prescribed by the Adulteration of Food Act, or the prosecution may be brought under the direction of the Local Authority. I believe, however, that very little adulterated tea is sold in Ireland, and that as a rule the poorer classes purchase teas which are comparatively high priced but strong. Regarding the concluding paragraph, the information referred to can, if desired, be obtained, but it will take some time to collect it.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked how many of the cases of lunacy were due to whisky?

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he could not say how many were due to its deleterious influences.

## LUNATICS IN BELFAST WORKHOUSE.

Mr. M'CARTAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of inmates in the lunatic department of the Belfast Workhouse on the 14th of December last, and also the number of deaths of inmates there since that date; and whether he has yet come to any decision as to the desirability of holding a sworn inquiry into the conduct and management of the department, the mode of admitting patients, their treatment, and generally into the working of the establishment?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have not yet completed my inquiries into the matter raised by this and previous questions addressed to me by my hon. Friend, the importance of which I fully recognise, and I must ask, therefore, that he will be good enough to defer the question for a few days.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has ascertained the correctness or otherwise of some figures I gave him a week or two ago to the effect that out of 400 or 500 lunatics confined in this place since last December 47 have died?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have called for a Report, but have not yet received it. I will not lose sight of the matter.

## POST OFFICE EMPLOYÉS AND BANK HOLIDAYS.

Mr. E. H. BAYLEY (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will explain why, in the Circulation Department of the General Post Office, a distinction is made between officers earning under 24s. per week and those earning over that amount, when remunerating them for services rendered on Bank Holidays; why the former are compelled to claim a day's pay, or a half day's pay, as the case may be, because of the smallness of the amount the payment by *pro ratâ* would give them, while the latter have a day's leave in lieu of monetary payment; whether the men on the lower scale have frequently petitioned, craving the privilege of being allowed the time instead of payment, and been refused; whether a large number of men have not yet been paid for work done so far back as Easter Monday last; and will he endeavour to have such a delay prevented in future?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): By the Rules of the Service a holiday is granted to each man belonging to the Established Sorting Staff on a Bank Holiday if he can be spared from duty, and if not, then upon some other day preceding the next Bank Holiday, provided that a substitute can be procured at the approved rate, and that such rate does not exceed the pay of the officer to whom the holiday is granted. Under this Rule it has not been possible to accede to the occasional Petitions to which the hon. Member refers. If a subsequent holiday cannot be given to a man who has been required to attend on Bank Holiday, then he receives extra payment for his Bank Holiday work at the same rate as his ordinary wages. The payment for past Bank Holiday work cannot be completed until the interval before the next Bank Holiday has nearly expired; otherwise opportunities of affording a holiday to some of the staff would be lost.

### SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH COMPANY'S EMPLOYÉS.

**Mr. J. ROWLANDS** (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received Memorials from the officers who were in the employ of the late Submarine Telegraph Company, asking that their period of service with the Company should be recognised towards their pension; and whether any steps have been taken to deal with the claims put forward in the Memorials?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: The last Memorial on the subject which has reached my hands was dated the 23rd of October last, and it was answered on the 10th of the following month. The subject has, on more than one occasion, been considered by the Treasury, and the officers in question are aware not only of the steps which have been taken to deal with their representations, but also with the result.

### LIGHTHOUSES OFF THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

**Mr. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Northern Lights Commission has recommended the erection of a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands, off the west coast of the Island of Lewis; and whether that recommendation has been sanctioned by the Board of Trade; if so, whether any steps have been taken to carry out the work?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: The Northern Lights Commissioners inform me that their recommendation to erect a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands was recently approved and the erection sanctioned by the Board of Trade when the state of the Mercantile Marine will admit of it. No steps have as yet been taken towards its construction.

### ENGINEER EXAMINATIONS BY THE BOARD OF TRADE.

**Mr. HOWELL** (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state to the House how many chief, second, and third class engineers, respectively, were passed by the Board of Trade during the year ending the 30th day of April, 1894?

*Mr. A. Morley*

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): 10 extra first class; 752 first class, and 924 second class engineers were passed during the period to which my right hon. Friend refers. No third class engineers' certificates are provided for by Statute or issued by the Board of Trade.

### DRUMREILLY POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

**Mr. TULLY** (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware of the great public inconvenience caused in South Leitrim by the refusal of the postal officials to establish a post from Ballinamore to Deradda, in consequence of which people residing in the extensive parish of Drumreilly have often to wait four and five days for their letters, and have to send special messengers many miles to the nearest post office to obtain them; and whether, in view of these circumstances, he will order the establishment of a post from Ballinamore to Deradda?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: I have not yet been able to obtain sufficient information from Ireland to enable me to answer the hon. Member's question, but as soon as I receive a full Report I will communicate with him.

### MOHILL LOAN FUND SOCIETY.

**Mr. TULLY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 24th of March last, at the meeting of the Committee of the Mohill Loan Fund Society, Mr. Francis Guckian, Derrywillow, was elected second clerk by 13 votes to 9; that he gave in the names of his sureties for £200; and that he has since got a letter from the Dublin Loan Fund Board refusing to sanction his appointment; and whether he can state what are the grounds for such refusal?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph of the question. The Secretary to the Loan Fund Board reports that the grounds on which the Board refused to sanction the appointment are that the votes of the minority included the treasurer of two of the trustees, and two parish priests. I confess the legality of this decision is not apparent to me, and I am causing further inquiry to be made.

### BREENAGH POST OFFICE.

**Mr. A. O'CONNOR** (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will arrange for the sale of postal orders at the post office at Breenagh, in Donegal, the nearest postal order office, New Mills, being four miles distant?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: I will make inquiry whether the hon. Member's request can be complied with.

### SCOTCH POLICE PENSION ACT.

**Mr. CALDWELL** (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the 35th Annual Report of the Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland in which he points out the necessity for having the provisions of the Scotch Pension Act assimilated to the English Pension Act; and whether he intends to introduce a remedial measure this Session?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: I am, of course, aware of the opinion expressed in the Report of the Inspector of Constabulary. The hon. Member is, no doubt, aware that in the English and Scottish Police Pension Bills, as introduced in 1890, the scales were identical, but that the Select Committee of this House, which was composed almost entirely of Scottish Members to whom the latter Bill was referred, reported in favour of a uniform scale of sixtieths, and this view was endorsed by the Legislature.

### INSANITARY STATIONS ON THE HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the statements made in the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Ross-shire as to the insanitary condition of stations on the Highland Railway, and the lack of a sufficient supply of water at these stations for flushing and drinking purposes; and whether steps will be taken to require the Highland Railway Company to make satisfactory provision for the travelling public and the *employés* of the Company?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: The General Manager of the Highland Railway telegraphs the Board of Trade that he has not seen the Report of the Medical Officer referred to, but that the engineer of the line is engaged in improving the sanitary condition of the stations in Ross-shire.

### HIGHLAND STEAMBOATS.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made in the Report of the Medical Officers of Health for Ross-shire as to the want of proper sanitary arrangements on board steamboats in the Highlands of Scotland; and whether steps will be taken to compel the owners of passenger steamers to keep their vessels in a sanitary condition?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: I have communicated with the principal officers of the Board of Trade on the East and West Coasts of Scotland, and am told that no complaints in regard to sanitary arrangements on board Highland steamers have been made to them. I have also obtained through the courtesy of the County Clerk the Report referred to by the hon. Member, and the only reference to the subject I can find is—

> "Another matter requiring attention and improvement is the condition of the sanitary arrangements on board steamboats."

If any definite complaints are made to the Board of Trade they shall be at once attended to.

**Mr. WEIR**: I shall take an early opportunity of bringing this matter under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman.

### FATHER DUNPHY AND LAND-GRABBING.

**Mr. MACARTNEY** (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 22nd of April Father Dunphy, P.P., in the course of his sermon dwelt forcibly on the baneful effects of the cursed vice of land-grabbing, and also referred to certain cases in his district; and whether any Report on this matter has been made by the Constabulary?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: A report of what took place on the occasion referred to was published in a local newspaper, and the police inform me that this report is fairly accurate.

**Mr. MACARTNEY**: Will the Police Authorities take steps to protect the persons thus named?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The hon. Member may rest assured that every care is taken to protect anyone who is supposed to be in any danger.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL**: In what parish did this occur?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: In the county of Waterford, I believe.

## INCREASE OF INSANITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

**Mr. HAYDEN**: On behalf of the hon. Member for Waterford, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with regard to the fact that the number of insane persons under official cognizance in England and Wales has increased from 41,120 in 1862 to 89,822 in 1892, whether there are any grounds for holding that the continuous increase shown by the statistics is only an apparent one; and whether he has called, or intends to call, for a special Report on the subject, similar to that just laid upon the Table in relation to Ireland?

**The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): The figures quoted give the increase in the number of persons officially known to be lunatics. The Lunacy Commissioners believe that the increase is not due to any general increase of insanity greater than that of population, but to the larger proportion of cases now brought under official cognizance, and detained under care and treatment. No special Report on the subject appears necessary. It will be referred to in the forthcoming Annual Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy.

## DISEASE AMONG DARTMOOR PONIES.

**Mr. MILDMAY** (Devon, Totnes): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether his attention has been drawn to the prevalence of a parasitic skin disease, of an infectious nature, amongst the ponies grazing on certain parts of the Forest of Dartmoor; and whether he will take any precautions to prevent the further spread of a disease which is already causing great loss and expense to pony-keepers in those parts?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: The attention of my Department had not previously been directed to this matter, but the inquiries I have made suggest that the disease is similar to that reported from West Cornwall last year. In that case a special Order was issued giving the Local Authorities certain powers with respect to animals affected with the disease, and I shall be happy to communicate with the Local Authorities for Devonshire with a view to ascertain whether it would be desirable that a similar course should be pursued in the present instance.

## CONDEMNED NAVAL CHAINS.

**Mr. MARTIN** (Worcester, Droitwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can now inform the House what exact steps have been taken by the Admiralty to prevent chains, that have been condemned as unfit for service, and sold as old iron, being made up and resold as new chains, to the danger of purchasers and the detriment of the chain makers' trade?

***The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY** (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): After an inquiry into the whole question of the disposal of old chain, an Admiralty Circular was issued on the 19th of March to the Home Yards and Malta, directing how old chain returned from ships is to be dealt with in future. I shall be happy to show a copy of the Circular to any hon. Member who may be interested in the subject. The following are the principal points:—

> Any defective links found, after thorough examination, are to be cut out, and new links inserted, and the chains, after due test, are to be returned to the store or ship as good and fit for sea service. Chain which cannot be made serviceable, or made good and fit for harbour service, is to be cut up and worked into forgings for ship and engine work; but if it cannot be conveniently and economically used, and is proposed for sale, the end links, and distances of about 6 feet apart, are to be stamped, and the stay pins between these marks knocked out.

These rules will, we hope, while tending to economy, be an effective check on future attempts to make up, and sell as new chain, chains which have been condemned as unfit for use in the Service.

## INSANITARY HOUSES IN LIVERPOOL.

**Mr. FORWOOD** (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has received from the City Council of Liverpool a request for an inquiry into the question of demolishing 500 houses reported to be unfit for habitation by the

Medical Officer of Health for that city, under the powers conferred upon him by local Acts; if the Local Government Board have any statutory powers enabling it to act in the matter; if such authority exists, will he extend the inquiry so as to include a consideration of the early demolition of the very large number, estimated at 10,000, of similar unfit habitations in that city; and is he aware that the Liverpool City Council, in the early part of last year, resolved by a majority to postpone for 12 months any action as regards the demolition of insanitary houses?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The Local Government Board received an application from the City Council of Liverpool for sanction to a loan of £50,000 in connection with the demolition of insanitary houses in the city. A loan of £25,000 was sanctioned, but the Board determined to hold a local inquiry before sanctioning a further amount. The inquiry has from time to time been deferred by the desire of the Council, but in consequence of a communication which the Board have now received it will be proceeded with at an early date. The Board have no power to extend the inquiry as suggested in the second paragraph of the question. I understand that a resolution to the effect of that referred to in the third paragraph was passed by the Council.

MR. FORWOOD: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if, in view of the fact that the Medical Officer reported these houses as unfit for habitation and in a condition and situation injurious, dangerous, and prejudicial to health, he will accelerate the inquiry as much as possible?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I will certainly do my very best in that direction.

## QUALIFICATION OF TEACHERS OF ART CLASSES.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Education Department intend to adhere to the qualifications as set out in the Code for teachers of art classes; and, if so, can he say why exemptions are allowed in certain cases, but not generally?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): Some few cases—not more than six in the last two years—have occurred in which teachers have been specially recognised as teachers of art classes, though they had not passed the examinations laid down in the Science and Art Directory. In all these cases it was shown, to the satisfaction of the Department, that though the proposed teacher had not passed these specific examinations, he or she had given evidence of possessing the requisite skill and knowledge. These exemptions were, for the most part, made on the representation of the Local Authority, that they were desirable in the interests of art instruction in the neighbourhood.

## NEWFOUNDLAND TREATY OBLIGATIONS.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any, and what, negotiations are being conducted between Her Majesty's Government and that of France relative to an amicable settlement of the Newfoundland Treaty obligations; whether there are any complaints from the inhabitants resident on the Treaty shores relative to the use made of them by the French?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): (1) There are at the present moment no negotiations proceeding. (2) Complaints are made from time to time to the naval officers of individual grievances; but, as a rule, the inhabitants resident on the Treaty shore and the Newfoundland fishermen are on friendly terms with the French fishermen.

## DOCKYARD POLICE TRANSFERS.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that an Order has been recently issued by the Chief Commissioner of Police to the Superintendents of the Metropolitan Police employed in the Government Dockyards, stating that all men who have any relatives in any Government establishment in the respective ports are to be transferred to other divisions; whether this is an enlargement of the established Rule to which the men raise no objection — namely, that no man should have relatives in the particular establishment where he does duty; whether he is aware that the effect of the enforcement of this new Order will subject several men of over 20 years' local service to removal, and the consequent breaking-up of their homes, and that many have already signified their intention of resigning the force in consequence; and whether, considering the severity of its effect, he will allow the original provisions as to relations to continue to suffice?

MR. ASQUITH: The Order recently issued by the Chief Commissioner of Police merely re-states and requires the observance of the Rule which has always been in force. The Rule is as follows:—

> "No constable be allowed to continue in any yard or other establishment in which they have relatives at work."

The non-observance of the Rule in some cases was found to lead to abuses which it became necessary to check. As to the third and fourth paragraphs of the question, the Commissioner has the matter under his personal consideration. Each case will be specially referred to him, and every effort will be made, consistently with the necessities of the service, to inflict the least possible inconvenience.

MR. KEARLEY: Do I understand that there has been no amendment of the Rule; that, in fact, this is no new Rule?

MR. ASQUITH: No new Rule at all.

### THE LADIES' GALLERY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, during the Whitsuntide holidays, he intends to remove the whole or part of the grating in front of the Ladies' Gallery?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): No, Sir.

MR. WEIR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the important part which ladies play in Parliamentary elections, the First Commissioner will not consider the desirability of transferring the ladies to the Peers' Gallery and the Peers to the Ladies' Gallery?

SIR D. MACFARLANE (Argyll): And may I ask whether the First Commissioner will take any steps to ascertain the wishes and desires of those most interested—namely, the ladies themselves; and whether for that purpose he will place a book at their disposal in which they can write "Yes" or "No."

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: I shall be glad to ascertain their opinion, but this is a question of some difficulty. As I stated before, it is a matter for the House to decide, and I must leave it in that position.

### PROSECUTIONS FOR BURNING IN ELGIN.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the case of a lad named John Nicol, who early last month set fire to a whin bush on the land of Mr. Robb, farmer, Strypehead, Mear, Elgin; whether he is aware that, although Mr. Robb made no complaint about the matter, it was reported to the police by one George Petrie, who occupies land bordering on Mr. Robb's, and that the lad was taken before the Sheriff Substitute in Elgin, on the 13th ultimo, and fined £1 or 20 days' imprisonment; whether he is aware that four days afterwards a number of lads burned George Petrie's effigy on Mr. Robb's land as a protest against Petrie's conduct in reporting Nicol to the police for burning the whin bush; that Petrie lodged a complaint with the police on the following day; that, in consequence, the police, armed with a warrant, apprehended a lad named George Grigor during the night of the 24th ultimo, and lodged him in Elgin Prison; and that he was brought before the Sheriff Substitute on the following day, and fined £1 10s. or 30 days' imprisonment for taking the lead in burning the effigy; and whether, considering the excitement which these proceedings have created in the district, he will inquire into the matter, and take steps to redress any miscarriage of justice, if such has taken place in these two cases?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.): I am informed that Nicol deliberately set fire to the whins near George Petrie's house, which is thatched, and towards which a strong breeze was blowing, with the risk of setting that house on fire. Nicol was charged with malicious mischief, and pleaded guilty, and several cases of whin burning having recently occurred he was fined as stated. Thereafter George Grigor and others went by night to George Petrie's house, burnt his effigy, and so alarmed him and his wife by their threats and otherwise, that they were subsequently charged with breach of the peace, and having pleaded guilty, and the case being, in the view of the Sheriff, a bad one, were also fined as stated. The fines in both cases were paid, and I am told there is no excitement in the district.

### ALLOTMENTS IN THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

**Mr. COBB** (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster when he proposes to lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by him to inquire as to the best method of encouraging the increase of allotments upon the lands belonging to the Duchy?

**The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY of LANCASTER** (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): The Report to which my hon. Friend refers was not called for or prepared with a view to its presentation to Parliament, and has not yet been printed. There is, however, no objection to its being presented, and this shall be done if my hon. Friend will move for it in the usual way.

### POLICE DUTY ON POLLING DAYS.

**Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will agree to the Return as to the numbers of police on duty on the days of the General Election of 1892?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: No, Sir. The Government do not think that the value of the information given by the proposed Return would bear any proportion to the time and trouble which its preparation would involve.

**Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER**: Will the right hon. Gentleman grant the Return for Ireland?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: That is a matter for the Chief Secretary.

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I think that the answer of my right hon. Friend applies with even greater force to Ireland.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: Are not the police on duty every day.

[No answer was given.]

### PROTECTION AGAINST TRAWLERS ON THE WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state when the new cruisers for the protection of the fisheries around the Island of Lewis and on the western mainland will be ready for service?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: A cruiser has been bought, but something very considerable will have to be done to her to fit her for the service. I have telegraphed to know when she will be ready, and have not yet received the reply. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will repeat the question in two days' time.

**Mr. HENEAGE** (Great Grimsby): For what special purpose has this cruiser been bought?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: For the protection of fishers on the West Coast.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: Against what?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Against trawling.

### FRAUDULENT ENLISTMENT.

**Mr. HANBURY** (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps, if any, are being taken to effect the identification of men fraudulently enlisting; and whether any Report has been received from any of our military attachés abroad in favour of the Bertillon system?

***The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR** (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): Beyond constant watchfulness and the question answered by the recruit on attestation, no special steps such as the hon. Member refers to are taken to identify men fraudulently enlisting. With regard to the Militia, the simultaneous training of many battalions checks the practice, and officers and noncommissioned officers have in certain cases been sent to inspect the recruits up for training. The Bertillon system may be admirably adapted for the identification of criminals, but it has not been thought desirable to apply such a system to the Army.

### LIVERPOOL CITY BOUNDARIES.

**Mr. FORWOOD**: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has yet considered the Report of Major-General Carey upon the extension of the city boundaries at Liverpool; and, if so, how soon he will be in a position to announce the result?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: The Report of General Carey on his second inquiry was received by the Local Government Board a few days ago. It deals with a most important subject, and needs very careful consideration. As soon as a decision is arrived at it will be communicated to the Corporation of Liverpool.

**Mr. FORWOOD**: Is it not a fact that the 14th of May is the latest day on which a Provisional Order can be introduced? Will the Order for the extension of the boundaries be made before that day?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE** replied that the 14th of May was the last day, but he could hardly hope that the Order would be completed by that day. The two things must stand together.

### MINISTERS OF RELIGION AS POOR LAW GUARDIANS.

**Mr. W. LONG** (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is a fact that, under "The Local Government Act, 1894," in any Union, which includes the whole or part of a borough, a minister of religion is disqualified from being elected a Guardian for the part or parts within the borough; and, if so, whether he will take the necessary steps to remedy this incapacity?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: The fact of a person being a minister of religion will not in any way affect his qualification for election as a Guardian of a parish in a Union which is wholly or partly included in a borough, if he is a parochial elector of some parish in the Union who has during the whole of the 12 months preceding the election resided in the Union.

***Mr. W. LONG**: Will the right hon. Gentleman look at the Act of 1894? I think he will there find it stated that a person must be qualified to be a Borough Councillor, and under the Municipal Corporations Act ministers are excluded.

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: I have looked into the question very carefully, and I feel confident the opinion I have given is an accurate one.

**Mr. LODER** (Brighton): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to state that these qualifications would not hold in the case of a minister of religion being co-opted by a Board of Guardians?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: I think not. I think my answer is accurate.

**Mr. LODER**: Both in regard to elected Guardians and co-opted Guardians?

[No answer was given.]

### VEHICULAR TRAFFIC IN PHŒNIX PARK, DUBLIN.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether Lord Iveagh and Lord Annally enjoy the privilege of private entrance from their residences to the Phœnix Park, with free passage for all vehicles through the Park; whether they pay anything for this privilege; when was it granted, and upon what principle; have any other private persons this right; are any such rights granted in English Royal Parks; can a Return be granted showing all privileges and easements of this kind in the Phœnix Park, and also the area of the ground occupied by the military police, polo clubs, and cricket clubs; has it been brought to his notice that the Park roads are not as carefully kept as formerly, and that the wear of the roads is not due to abnormal traffic through the Knockmaroon gate, but to imperfect metalling and gravelling; and were the market gardeners informed by the park keeper that their passes would only be continued up to the 31st of July; if so, was this done by authority?

***The SECRETARY to the TREASURY** (Sir J. T. Hibbert, Oldham): Lords Annally and Iveagh have the privilege of private entrance to the Park for their private carriages, but for no other vehicle. Passes are issued to both for market and farm carts. Neither Lord Annally nor Lord Iveagh pays anything for the privilege. The privilege of a gate through the Park wall was, it is believed, granted by George III. to Lord Carhampton in 1798, he being Commander of the Forces in that year. Lord

Carhampton sold his right to Luke White, whose heir became Lord Annally. The privilege of a gate through the Park wall was granted to a then owner of Farmleigh (now the property of Lord Iveagh) nearly 100 years ago by the Lord Lieutenant of the day. There are five other private entrances into the Park by private doors, representing very old privileges, probably quite 100 years old. I know of no similar rights for vehicles in English Royal Parks. There does not seem to be any need for a Return on the subject. The privileges and easements in the form of gates and doors are given above, and the other information asked for will be found in a Return presented to Parliament, on the 21st of February, 1888. The polo ground is not enclosed. At no period have the Park roads been in better order, or in so good order as at the present time, both as to metalling and gravelling. The passes for the Strawberry Beds residents were limited by the Board of Works to July 31, as by that time it will be known what steps the Grand Jury of the County Dublin intends to take for the improvement of the Chapelizod Road.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: If the roads are in such good order why are these unfortunate market gardeners to lose the right which they have enjoyed—with their forefathers—scores of years?

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, that the Park roads were, he understood, more used than formerly, owing to the condition of the roads outside the Park.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: These men only use the Park roads before 10 o'clock in the morning, and I cannot say that a right enjoyed for centuries should be taken from them and allowed to two noble Lords.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of extending the privilege possessed by these noble Lords to the directors of *The Freeman's Journal?*

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Unless the market gardeners are allowed the privilege I shall call attention to the matter on the Estimates.

## THE ESTATE DUTY.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the charge of Estate Duty imposed by the Finance Bill will be deducted from the principal value of unsettled real property passing by a death before the charge of Succession Duty is levied thereon, or whether the Succession Duty will be chargeable on the whole principal value without any deduction being made therefrom for the Estate Duty; and whether, in the case of settled real estate, the Estate Duty will be chargeable upon the total principal value of the estate, and the further Estate Duty of 1 per cent. also on the total principal value of the estate without any deduction therefrom of the Estate Duty, and finally the Succession Duty also on the total principal value without any deduction therefrom of the Estate Duty and the further Estate Duty?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): With reference to the first part of the question, it would be quite right that there should be provision made in the Bill for the deductions to which the hon. Member referred. The second part of the question stands on an entirely different footing, and I do not think the deduction suggested can be properly made; but I will look further into the matter.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the right hon. Gentleman think that under his Bill as it now stands the deduction would not be made?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I would rather rather reserve my opinion on that.

Mr. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what sum out of the total estimated increase of the Death Duties on realty will, in the opinion of the Inland Revenue Authorities, fall upon realty in Ireland?

Sir W. HARCOURT: The amount of Death Duties falling upon realty in Ireland is about 8·5 of the total amount for the United Kingdom. The Inland Revenue Authorities estimates the ultimate increase in the Death Duties on realty for the whole Kingdom in round figures at £1,300,000. Ireland's share in this, on the basis of the percentage mentioned, would be £110,500; but, inasmuch as the increase is largely due to the higher rates on very large properties, and the proportion of very large properties in Ireland is less than in England, the actual increase in Ireland will, presumably, be a good deal less than this. I am, however, unable to give the exact figures.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what sum, under the proposed new Death Duties, a son of 40 will have to pay who succeeded his father in a landed estate the selling value of which is estimated at £50,000; and what sum, under the existing law, a son of 40 has to pay who succeeds his father in a landed estate of which the net annual income is £1,375, or the equivalent at 2¾ per cent., the yield of Consols, to the estated named in the first question?

SIR W. HARCOURT: In the first case put by the hon. Member, the son, if he succeeded in fee simple, would pay exactly the same sum as if he succeeded to £50,000 Consols. In the second case, the son, succeeding in fee simple, is at present liable to pay £306 15s. Succession Duty, and Estate Duty of 1 per cent. on the capital value of the property, whatever it may be. The second part of the question assumes that a landed estate, at an annual income of £1,375, is worth £50,000, or 36 years' purchase. If it be worth that the prospects of the Exchequer are good.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what sum, in the first instance would have to be paid?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes; 4½ per cent. on £50,000—£2,250.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: So that the difference is as between £306 and £2,250?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That will depend on the capital value of the property. The hon. Member for the purposes of his question values the estate at 36 years' purchase.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Are we to understand the duty will be on the selling value of the property—on the sale by auction or any other way?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The valuation will be made in the best possible way having regard to the nature of the property. In some cases it may be desirable to fix it at so many years' purchase; in others it might be improper to do so, especially in the case of building land paying only a nominal rent. To take that at so many years' purchase would be obviously unfair, but it would be proper, on the other hand, in the case of a landed estate at rack rents, to take a certain number of years' value.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Would it not be better to substitute "marketable" for "capital" value? That is the old phrase.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I will consider that, but I have taken the words "capital value" because they are used in the Estate Duty.

MR. FINCH (Rutland): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon what basis advowsons, or the next presentations to Church benefices, are to be valued for the purposes of the Death Duties under the proposed Finance Bill?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Advowsons, and next presentations to Church benefices, will be assessed for Estate Duty on the values which they may be estimated to be worth at the death; that is to say, the sum which the accountable persons would be willing to accept in the open market. What that sum may be must depend on the circumstances of each case.

MR. FINCH: Is it not rather an interest in expectancy?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Advowsons are now valued under the Death Duties, and the hon. Member on referring to the 24th section will be able to see the principle on which it is done.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is not the right hon. Gentleman under a misconception? Would not the value of the advowson be the value not at the death, but at the date of rendering the account?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I can hardly go into these details across the Table.

## CESS AND STENT IN SCOTLAND.

MR. W. WHITELAW (Perth): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has yet been able to consider the Memorial of the Convention of Royal Burghs of Scotland with regard to cess and stent; if so, whether he can agree to the proposals thereof, and will have a Bill dealing with the subject on the lines of the Memorial submitted to Parliament?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have referred the Memorial to the Inland Revenue Authorities, and expect shortly to receive a Report from them on the subject.

### SALARIES OF INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS.

**MR. HAYDEN**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state when the revised scale of salaries will be issued to the supervisors and officers of Inland Revenue, which was promised to these officials in consequence of a Petition from them, and after interviews between the representatives of the Petitioners and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: The hon. Member is under a mistake in supposing that any revised scale of salaries has been promised to the supervisors and officers of Inland Revenue. Their scale of salaries has been repeatedly revised within the last seven or eight years, but I understand the question of a further revision is under the consideration of the Commissioners. No proposal has yet been made by them to the Treasury on the subject.

### NATIONAL DEBT ANNUITANTS.

**MR. DODD** (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, while Nonconformist ministers can and do attest pension papers for the Army and Navy, the Royal Patriotic Fund, the Coastguard and Customs, and the Police, they cannot attest the papers of annuitants of the National Debt; whether he has received complaints that, on account of the absence from his parish of any minister of the Established Church and there being no resident Justice of the Peace therein, the papers of annuitants could not be attested for some two or three weeks after annuities have become due, and consequently that the annuitants could not receive their money for this time; and whether he proposes to take any steps to remedy this state of things?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: My attention has been drawn to the inconvenience arising from the fact that Nonconformist ministers cannot attest the papers of annuitants of the National Debt. I hope to be able in some omnibus Bill to introduce a clause which will remedy this grievance.

### INCOME TAX ASSESSMENTS.

**MR. DARLING** (Deptford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will explain by what legal authority a man and woman earning separate salaries as teachers in Board schools, whose earnings would both be exempt separately from Income Tax, being separately entitled to deduction, are now charged such tax calculated on the amount of their two incomes added together; and whether, under the proposed changes, such incomes will be separately assessed in future, and the abatement allowed on each income singly?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: I assume that the man and woman referred to by the hon. and learned Member are man and wife. The legal authority is the Income Tax Act, 1842, Section 45. The proposed changes will not make any alteration in the existing law in this respect.

**MR. DARLING**: I did intend to deal with the case of man and wife who are engaged in the same employment, and I took the case of the Board school as one in which the point has arisen. I wanted to know if the incomes are assessed together, and, if so, is it done under a Treasury Minute?

**SIR W. HARCOURT**: It is done under Section 45 of the Income Tax Act, 1842. The present Bill proposes no change in that respect.

### THE EIGHT HOURS MOVEMENT.

**MR. BRUNNER** (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the decision of the House strictly to limit to eight hours per day the work underground of colliers, who work on an average not more than five days a week, he will give the House the best estimate he can form of the number of men working an average of 12 hours a day seven days a week, in the following trades: alkali works, other chemical works, bakeries, breweries, distilleries, blast furnaces, gas works, tinplate works, copper works, lead works, river steamers, and the carrying trades; and whether he proposes to include, or will consent to include, in the Factories and Workshops Bill, a provision taking power to regulate the hours of labour in all trades involving continuous work, day and night, Sundays and weekdays?

**MR. ASQUITH**: There do not exist materials on which to base a reliable estimate of the nature demanded in the case of industries within the province of my Department. Nor are there, I am informed, materials in the case of industries under the control of the Board of Trade. A loose estimate would, in my opinion, be worse than useless. As to the second paragraph of my hon. Friend's question, I must refer him to the Factory Bill, which I hope will be issued tomorrow.

## THE KNIGHT OF KERRY AND THE POOR RATE.

**Mr. KILBRIDE**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state what action has been taken by the Local Government Board to secure the payment of the poor's rate by the Knight of Kerry within the statutable period, so that the Parliamentary electors of Valentia rated at £4 and under may not be again deprived this year of the franchise?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Local Government Board have pointed out to the Guardians that they should impress on their collectors the necessity of using every means in their power to collect rates within the statutory time, so as to prevent the disfranchisement of the tenants.

## HOURS OF LABOUR ON THE CORNWALL RAILWAY.

**Mr. BURNIE** (Swansea, Town): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been drawn to the hours signalmen, gatemen, and trainmen have to be on duty on the Penzance and Cornwall mineral section of the Cornwall Railway; if he is aware that signalmen come on about 6 a.m. and leave about 12 midnight, excepting between 12.30 p.m. and 5 p.m., when they are relieved; that gatemen come on duty about 6 a.m., and remain on continuous duty until 11 and 12 midnight, four nights per week; that trainmen are kept out 14 and 15 hours, and sometimes over; if so, what steps can be taken to secure a diminution of the hours of labour; and do the Schedules sent in to the Board of Trade by the Railway Company show the system of working, or only the number of hours actually at the post?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: The Board of Trade have recently received representations with reference to the hours worked by the signalmen and goods guards employed on the Penzance division and on the Cornwall mineral section of the Great Western Railway, and are communicating with the Company thereon. If a like representation is made by or on behalf of the gatemen on these lines the Board will include them in the application for Returns. The Schedules, as far as practicable, show the system of working.

## LIGHT ON FLANNAN ISLANDS.

**Mr. BUCHANAN** (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether sanction has been given to the erection of a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands; and whether the work will be commenced at an early date?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: The Board of Trade have intimated to the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses that they are prepared to sanction the erection of a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands, whenever the Mercantile Marine Fund will permit of expenditure for the purpose, which they regret to say is not the case at present.

**Mr. BUCHANAN** inquired if, as this lighthouse was much desired by all persons interested in navigation in the North, the right hon. Gentleman could not now sanction such preliminary expenditure as would enable the work of construction to be effectively commenced next year?

**Mr. MUNDELLA** replied that the works at present in hand would absorb all the available funds for several years; but when there were funds available, he would be only too happy to forward this work.

## THE IRISH CHURCH TEMPORALITIES FUND.

**Mr. KNOX**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt have lent to the Irish Church Temporalities Fund £3,356,196 at 3½ per cent., and £950,000 at 3¼ per cent., secured on an annual revenue of £523,462 administered by Commissioners appointed by the Government; what is the total amount of the interest received by the National Debt Commissioners from the Irish Church Fund over and above 3 per cent. since 1869; whether the present annual excess of interest over 3 per cent is over £19,000; and whether, inasmuch as 3½ per cent. is much in excess of the rate at which a loan could be obtained on the same security in the open market, steps will be taken to reduce the interest to 3 per cent., or to enable a loan to be raised at that rate to repay the existing loans?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: There remains outstanding at this date out of the total amounts advanced—at 3½ per cent., £3,356,232 17s. 3d.; at 3¼ per cent., £950,000. The total amount of interest received by the National Debt Commissioners from the Irish Church Fund over and above 3 per cent. since 1869 in respect of the total advances of £11,521,862 15s. has been £711,520 16s. 10d. The present annual excess of interest over 3 per cent. is £19,156. I am not aware at what rate a loan could be obtained in the open market on the security of the Irish Church Fund. But I would point out that the advances made by the National Debt Commissioners were made long before the recent conversion, and that the terms represent an existing bargain which ought not to be modified to the advantage of either Party without strong reason.

MR. KNOX: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of giving such powers as are necessary by legislation, inasmuch as £18,000 more has been paid out of the Irish Fund than should have been paid if proper attention had been given to the subject?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I will consider that.

## THE "COST RICA PACKET" CASE.

SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government are aware of the hardships suffered by the petitioners in the *Costa Rica Packet* case, owing to the delay in the settlement of the claim; and whether it is in the power of the Government to make any further statement with regard to the present position of the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The whole circumstances of the case have been very carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government, and a renewed representation on the subject is being addressed to the Netherlands Government by Her Majesty's Minister at the Hague, with the object of obtaining compensation for the captain of the *Costa Rica Packet* with as little delay as possible. No further statement can be made until the result of this representation is known.

SIR C. W. DILKE: Has the case of the owners and crew been dropped?

SIR E. GREY: The case of the owners and crew has never been put forward.

## WORKMEN'S CHEAP TICKETS.

MR. DODD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the condition contained in some of the workmen's cheap tickets by the London and North Western Railway Company, to the effect that the workman, if injured on his journey, or his representatives, if he should be killed, should be entitled to no compensation even if the injury or death were caused by the negligence of the Company, and to the case of "Flowers *v.* the London and North Western Railway Company," tried at Cardiff, which appears to decide that such a condition would in general be valid, but that an infant by reason of his infancy is not thereby bound; if he will consider the propriety of making such conditions in workmen's or passengers' tickets unlawful; whether as to cattle and goods the law is now that unreasonable conditions are of no force and invalid; and if he can state to what extent Railway Companies now issue tickets to workmen exempting themselves from their ordinary liability for negligence?

MR. MUNDELLA: My right hon. Friend's question raises a nice point of law, and I am unable to express an opinion upon it. It is for the Courts to decide whether the conditions imposed by the London and North Western Railway Company are reasonable. The contention of the Company is that the special contract, in many cases, is made in return for facilities which the law does not compel the Company to give. I am not aware that there is any general application of the system to which the hon. Gentleman takes exception.

**Mr. DARLING**: May I ask whether, if anyone objects to the conditions of these tickets, it is not open to him to buy an ordinary ticket on the ordinary conditions?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: Of course.

## UGANDA.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** (Paddington, S.): I beg, Sir, to put a question to the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, of which I have given him notice. It is, whether the attention of the Foreign Office has been drawn to a telegram in *The Times* of to-day, dated May 6, from Zanzibar. It is headed—

> "Defeat of Kabarega.
>
> "Major Owen, one of the officers who accompanied the recent expedition under Colonel Colville against Kabarega, Chief of Unyoro, has arrived at Mombasa, having left Uganda on March 24. He reports that the operations undertaken in Unyoro against Kabarega have been brilliantly successful. Kabarega himself has been driven out of Unyoro, and a line of forts has been established from the Albert Nyanza, along the south-western bank of which Kabarega's kingdom is situated, to Uganda. Major Owen also went to the north end of Lake Albert and down the Nile to Wadelai, where he planted the British flag. The Soudanese troops behaved splendidly and the Waganda auxiliaries were thoroughly loyal. All the members of the Administration were well when Major Owen left Uganda.—*Reuter*."

**Sir C. W. DILKE**: Perhaps it would be convenient to ask another question at the same time. Some time ago I gave notice to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that I would ask him when he would fix a day for the discussion of the Uganda Vote——

**Lord R. CHURCHILL**: Let my question be answered.

**Sir C. W. DILKE**: If the noble Lord prefers it, I will put my question afterwards.

**Sir E. GREY**: I received notice from the noble Lord that he was going to ask this question but a few moments ago. I can only inform him that no information has been received at the Foreign Office confirming the telegram.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL**: May I ask whether, if any information is received, the hon. Baronet will communicate it to the House?

**Sir E. GREY**: I believe it is a rule never to make any promises with regard to information until it is received. Of course, if it can be communicated to the House, it will be in answer to a question.

**Sir C. W. DILKE**: May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when, having regard to his repeated promise of an early opportunity, he will be able to name a day for the discussion of the Uganda Vote?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I think my right hon. Friend knows why it is that I have not been able to answer that question before. I have really been driven out of all my calculation of days. I have always said that we must have before Whitsuntide the Second Reading of the Registration Bill and the Second Reading of the Budget Bill. Now I understand that the discussion on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill is not to close till Thursday. [" Oh, oh !" *and* " Hear, hear ! " *from the Opposition.*] That I understand to be the case. Then, I have also been informed that it would not be for the general convenience of the House, if that were so, that the House should be asked to meet on Friday morning. Certainly my own experience is that we do not get very much good out of such a Sitting, and I am perfectly willing to meet the convenience of the House in that matter. If the House were to wish that the Adjournment should be moved on Thursday, we will take that course, or to ask that the House should meet on Friday morning. I am perfectly willing to collect the opinion of the House on the matter. With reference to the matter to which the noble Lord's question refers, it is clearly of great importance, before we discuss the Uganda question, that we should know how that matter stands. No official information has come to hand yet, and any that does come would have a most important bearing. Therefore, I should imagine that for all these reasons it would not be for the general convenience to take the Uganda discussion on Friday morning.

**Sir C. W. DILKE**: May we understand that an early and suitable opportunity will be given for a Debate on the Uganda Vote?

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR** (Manchester, E.): I am much obliged to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his expression of desire to meet the views of the House. The reasons given against a Sitting on Friday are so valid that I should suggest that the best course would be to suspend the Twelve o'Clock Rule on Thursday, not, of course, with a view to a late Sitting, but in order to ensure the termination of the Debate. The Motion for the Adjournment might be put down as the second Order, and be taken after the Budget Debate is disposed of.

Sir W. HARCOURT : I shall be glad to take that course.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the serious character of the news from Zanzibar, he will use his influence to induce the Foreign Office to telegraph to the Consul at that place in order to ascertain whether the report was well founded or not? I may also ask the right hon. Gentleman to induce the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs to distribute maps among Members showing the frontiers of the territory called officially Uganda. I do not myself know what Uganda is.

Sir W. HARCOURT : I think there are already maps available in the Tea Room.

Mr. LABOUCHERE : There is a map in the Tea Room, but it does not indicate at all precisely what the frontiers of Uganda are.

Sir W. HARCOURT : I will see what can be done in the matter. I can assure the hon. Member that I will use my influence, such as it is, and I shall be especially glad to exert it upon himself.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*Mr. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, he rose to move that the Bill be read a second time upon this day six months, and he desired to give to the House some out of numerous reasons why the measure should not receive a Second Reading. The first reason he would assign was that the measure was of an exceedingly cumbersome and complicated character, and that it was introduced at a period of the Session when time was short and the programme long. That reason alone ought to render the Bill unacceptable to some sections of the House, for the reason that they were supposed to be hungering for various items, which could not fail to be delayed if no modification of this very substantial Bill were agreed to by the Government. They had been told by a master of Parliamentary tactics that the task of readjusting the Death Duties would by itself absorb a whole Session. That task, however, the Government now conjoined with many others, such as the resettlement of the incidence of the Income Tax, the reconsideration for certain purposes of the Naval Defence Act and the Imperial Defence Act, and the imposition of additional duties on beer and spirits. The Bill, in fact, bristled with controversial questions. It reminded him of barbed wire, which could hardly be touched at any point without inflicting injury. Controversial provisions had been introduced into the Bill from no pressing financial reason whatever. The brewing industry was represented in the House, and also the hop and barley-growing industries, and he hoped that those Members would hear a warning voice from their constituents as to how they should vote. With regard to the duties on alcohol, if they were meant as an instalment given to the temperance vote, he would point out that those taxes were said to fall upon the producer, and could, therefore, have no effect in reducing the consumption of the cup that cheered, but did not, necessarily, inebriate. It was true that some surreptitious water might be introduced. These extra duties upon alcohol appeared to sin against the canons of finance. The Spirit Duty affected a trade respecting which the revenue had been falling for the last four years. He admitted that it had been increasing as regarded beer, but it surely was not wise, from the point of view of Excise, to exaggerate duties until they compelled adulteration. The part of the measure, however, which he wished to criticise specially was that which imposed increased taxation on land. The Party to which he belonged claimed that in 1853 land was given by the late Leader of the Liberal Party certain advantages in respect of the Death Duties, and that those advantages were given because land suffered under special disadvantages in respect of rates and the so-called Land Tax and Income Tax under Schedule (A). Now the Government proposed to take away the advantages which were conferred upon land in 1853, although the disadvantages under which land suffered had rather increased than diminished since that year. The Secretary of State for War, on the First Reading of the Bill, dealt with this matter in a very clever speech, which, however, was not to the point. The contention of the Opposition was that by this Bill all realty would be heavily burdened when the existing heavy pressure of the rates made it very undesirable that it should be so burdened. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman was no answer to the argument that realty should not bear additional taxation; it merely proved that one class of realty, house property, was already rated to an almost intolerable amount. The case of realty was so strong that it could afford to concede all that was urged in connection with hereditary burdens. It was just possible, by making the worst case against land, to bring the so-called hereditary burdens up to £14,800,000. In the Report of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India the gross immediate expenditure for the relief of the poor was put at £8,643,000. In an Appendix to the Report an account was given of the expenditure by every Local Authority in the country; and from those accounts he had taken every item relating to roads and bridges, and including sums spent for street-washing, scavenging, &c. The amount came to £6,248,000, and thus, with all these exaggerated statements against land, the total of hereditary burdens could only be calculated at £14,800,000. But the rates in the same year (1890-91) were £27,800,000, and therefore the local burden on realty, without the hereditary burdens, was £13,000,000 a year. What case could the right hon. Gentleman make for personalty? In the Report he stated—

> "The entire Treasury subvention, including not merely payments to the several Local Authorities but also other charges of a local nature, borne by annual Votes of Parliament, in 1892 were £11,846,482."

To get at this sum, credited to personalty, the right hon. Gentleman had to reckon as a local matter such an Imperial matter as public elementary education grants; and the total naturally included the large expenditure to assist the roads which he had already retransferred to realty. Further, it must be remembered that realty paid into the Treasury from which the subventions were taken. But, granting everything to the right hon. Gentleman, and stating the case as adversely as possible to realty, it remained that personalty paid £12,000,000 where realty paid £13,000,000. But he would show where that case broke down. No one would contend that the value of realty and personalty were at all equal at present. They all knew that personalty vastly exceeded realty in value. Unless and until it was proved that for local public purposes, apart from hereditary burdens altogether, personalty and realty bore the local burdens in equal proportions, there was no ground for claiming that they should bear the Imperial taxation in equal proportions. Taking the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer out of his own Budget speech, his case for realty was founded on the right hon. Gentleman's statement that

> "The inequalities in the position of real estate should be considered together."

In the present measure it was proposed to equalise the Death Duties; and the right hon. Gentleman said that when this equal scale came into operation personalty would pay £11,000,000 to the £2,500,000 contributed by realty. That was in the proportion of 22 to 5. In 1893-4 the Death Duties yielded £10,000,000, and out of this, according to the proportion indicated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, land and houses would have contributed £1,850,000. They actually contributed, however, £1,150,000 — an underpayment of £700,000. But as to Income Tax, under Schedule (A), the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to admit that realty paid too much, and to make certain deductions, which he assessed at £700,000. Therefore, the amount underpaid on Death Duties was neutralised by the amount overpaid on Income Tax. But the right hon. Gentleman would object that the leaseholds came under Schedule (A). He calculated that one-quarter should be deducted for leaseholds, or £175,000, and that left a net over-payment by realty in regard to Income Tax under Schedule (A) of £525,000. Therefore, the balance of payment in favour of personalty and against realty, in respect of Death Duties and Income Tax, was only £175,000. But he contended that the deductions under Schedule (A) ought to be twice or three times the amount at which the Chancellor of the Exchequer put them; and if that contention were carried the balance would at once be in favour of realty. But, admitting the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement, there was another item to be considered. House Duty, which produced £1,425,000, fell on realty alone. [Sir W. Harcourt: It falls upon the occupier.] The occupier gave less rent for his house because of the burdens upon property. After all these figures, could anyone say that realty paid so much too little to Imperial taxation, as compared with personalty, that there was any justice in the Bill? Realty did not ask to be treated in an exceptionally favourable manner, but by the Bill it was being treated in an exceptionally unfavourable manner. That was not done on any principle of reason or justice, but simply on the rule of counting heads and taxing the minority. It was useless to appeal to political economy; but even on the principles of the "odd-man cult" he would show that the minority were a very substantial minority in voting power. He would not argue for the owners of the great estates. He could not expect any sympathy for men whose solvency was apparent, if not real. Besides, these men were only to have one vote. But the increased burden on the large estates would be fourfold the present average burdens. The smaller estates, with which he would concern himself, were not under strict settlement, as were the larger. Where the estate was settled, the duty would be paid once for the whole settlement. But where the estate was unsettled, the duty on the whole capital value of the estate would have to be paid over and over again as often as there was a succession. The other night the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he had benefited the yeoman farmer under this Bill. He spoke of the case of a man with £1,000 in land, and he enlarged his holding to 200 acres. Doubtless hon. Gentlemen opposite flashed these tidings of comfort and joy to all the small yeomen in their divisions who were, perhaps, doubtful about the measure, but he hoped an analysis would be taken now with regard to the relief given. First of all, it must be just £1,000 in land and nothing else. He must have no stock, no furniture, and no implements, because if he had he would get outside the limits of the protection of the 13th clause. And what would happen if he got outside that Alsatia? In the case of £1,000 in land that land, taking the general rule, would go from father to son. The age of the son would be 40 years, and, according to the calculations adopted by Somerset House, the net income from this £1,000 would be about £40 a year. As the law stood at present there would be no Probate Duty upon land, but Succession Duty would be paid on the life interest in an annuity of £40, and the successor, the son, at 40 would have to pay £8 18s. 6d. He might spread it over a period of eight years, and in that case he would pay interest at 4 per cent. upon the last four yearly instalments. Such interest would amount to about 9s., so that according to the present scale £9 7s. 6d. was all that the yeoman would have to pay. According to the new scale proposed by the Bill he would first have to pay a valuer to value the land. Taking Ryde's scale for valuing land—which was in use in the Taxing Master's Office—he found that the fee for valuing land of the value of £1,000 was £18 18s., and on an estate of £200,000 the fees would be £1,063 13s. At the present moment the cost of the valuation for Probate Duty was paid by the people who took the succession, so that they might take it that the successor, would have to pay £5, at the least, for the valuation. Then, under Clause 13, he had to pay "fees of Court and expenses, 15s.," and he had to pay 2 per cent. on £1,000, which made £20, or a total of £25 15s., as against £8 18s. 6d. This was the case the right hon. Gentleman selected as an illustration of how grateful the yeoman's sons would be to him. He had shown that the total amount spread over eight years would be, as the law now stood, £9 7s. 6d., but if the payment were spread over eight years under this Bill what would happen? The successor would have to pay 3 per cent. interest on the whole of the eight annual instalments, which would be two guineas, so that the total amount would be £27 17s., as against £9 7s. 6d. The yeoman, he was sure, would be duly grateful for the relief the right hon. Gentleman had afforded him. Perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say that he (Mr. Lawson) had taken the age at too high a figure, and that he ought not to say the successor would be 40; that it would be unkind of the yeoman to upset the calculation by a too long life, and that he ought to die young and leave a young successor. Four years was the age at which a successor would have the greatest expectancy of life. If a son succeeded at four years of age he would have to pay under the present system £11 11s., as against £25 15s. suggested by the Bill. Take the case of collaterals. Suppose it went to a brother at the age of 40, as the estate was not over £1,000 in value there would, by the 13th clause, be no Succession Duty to pay. A brother succeeding to an estate all in realty of £1,000 would pay now a duty of £27. He would have the advantage of a pound or two, because under the Chancellor of the Exchequer's scheme he would only pay £25 15s. That was to say, there would be 25s. to the benefit of the collateral. But was the policy of this House that lineals should be injured in order that collaterals should gain? The condition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's relief was that the yeoman must die young and not leave his land to his children. He said he would point out what would happen if a man, by having stock and implements, got outside the Alsatia of the limit of Clause 13. Suppose that his land was worth £1,000 and that he had personalty of £500. His net income for the land would be £40. The Probate Duty at £1 for each £50 would be £10; he would pay for Succession Duty £9; so that altogether he would now pay £19. Under this Bill he would pay 3 per cent. on the capital value of £1,500, making £45, as against £19. Then, again, the larger fees of the Court for probate on a larger sum, expenses of valuation, increased interest on instalments, largely increased the difficulties. Now take the case of a brother coming into an estate of that sort. He would now pay: Probate Duty, £10; Legacy Duty, at 3 per cent., £15; and Succession Duty, at 4½ per cent., £27—making in all £52. In future he would pay 3 per cent. on the capital value of the whole property, £45; Legacy Duty, 3 per cent., £15; Succession Duty, 3 per cent. on the capital value of the land, £30—or in all £90, as against £52. He would go on with the list of those whom this measure directly injured. Take the case of younger children whose portions were to be paid out of the estate. Under the settlements now existing the amount of these portions was fixed and could not be altered. What would happen if this Bill passed? These portions were not very liberal, and he believed in many parts of the country to have the portion of an Earl's daughter was a synonym for poverty. From these portions, which could not be increased, because the amount was settled at the marriage of the parents, there would be taken off this very considerable additional duty, which would be reckoned in this way: they would not have to pay at a rate fixed by what they themselves received, but they would have to pay at the rate fixed by what the eldest brother got, and on what was the value of his property. There was thus a class distinctly injured. He would give another class which included a multitude of people—namely, those who had purchased reversionary interests. Some of the greatest Insurance Companies had invested their money in reversionary interests, and he did not think there was any man who wished to do anything to injure the great Insurance Companies, on whose stability the peace of mind and comfort of the vast majority, high and low, in this country depended. When he showed that this Bill would injure them he thought he should have driven one nail into the coffin of these proposals. These reversionary interests had been purchased by the Companies on a careful calculation of what would have to be paid to the State when the reversions fell into their possession. If this measure were passed they imposed a new duty on these reversionary interests. And how was that duty to be calculated? Not by what was the amount of the reversion they took, but by the total estate left by the man upon whose death these reversions were expectant. If the man left £1,000,000, the holder of a reversion of £1,000 of that £1,000,000 would have to pay at 8 per cent. By this means they reduced the purchase of a reversion, which was now a legitimate business, to a mere gamble, only to be undertaken by a cent. per cent. money-lender. He had named several classes who would be injured, and he would now state generally that under the clauses of this Bill the Government were injuring every man in this country who had a house or who occupied a yard of land, and the only persons they were sparing were those who were living in tents on commons or in barges on canals. Did they not know that the tenant of land or a house which was heavily encumbered was in an unfortunate position? A few repairs and no improvements was all that he could get from his landlord. The curse of encumbrances which fell on every tenant in this country the Government were increasing in this Bill in two directions. In the first place, there would be the heavy mortgage to the State, which would last for eight or nine years after the succession, but in the case of settled estates this incubus would be perpetual and absolutely irremovable. It was not likely that the first life-tenant would pay the full Estate Duty out of his own pocket, he would raise it by a perpetual mortgage upon the estate. At the commencement of the next settlement the process would be repeated, and the land would become more and more embarrassed, until the dreams of the land nationalizers would be realised, and out of the poverty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the State would inherit the earth. Clause 7, of Sub-section 9, ran—

> "Where any proceeding for the recovery of Estate Duty in respect of any property is instituted, the High Court shall have jurisdiction to appoint a Receiver of the property, and to order a sale of the property."

So that eventually the land would be sold by the High Court to pay for these heavy incumbrances they were building up. He left it to others to speak of the injury done by accumulated mortgages and incumbrances to everyone in the agricultural community, which was already suffering from want of capital and from a sense of insecurity of land-tenure, which prevented money being put in the agricultural interest. He also left it to others to speak of the injury done to schools and charities, which were largely dependent upon the liberality and generosity of country squires; and to the injury done to the employment of agricultural labourers throughout the whole of the country districts. He would leave it to the Representatives in this House of all other industries injured by this measure to speak of the manner in which those industries and interests were injured, but he hoped the country gentlemen by their action on this Bill would prove that they no longer deserved the scathing sarcasm of Walpole—that while moneyed men were like hogs who never failed to grunt and stir if even a bristle were touched, the country gentlemen were like sheep who would suffer themselves to be fleeced every year. Let them show that they would not suffer themselves to be fleeced without very vigorous protestation. He should be told that it was unusual to reject a Budget Bill, and that it was more usual to attack some specific provision of it, and by so under-mining it to bring down the whole edifice. He objected to these proposals as a whole; it was a long and complicated measure, but not more lengthy than it was unjust. He was aware that certain inconveniences would arise from the adoption of the course he asked the House to take, but were these inconveniences to be made a reason for the greatest possible injustice? If they attempted to mend this Bill in Committee they should be told, in the first place, that they must regard the Budget as a whole; and, in the second place, that they should be merely postponing the inconveniences which must arise from the collapse of this measure—which he regarded as inevitable—to a period when they would be still more inconvenient. Let them face this matter at once, while yet there was time. Let them ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give them a Bill more simple and more suitable to the circumstances of the time, and more equitable, and if he could not, let them ask him to give them the chance of appealing to the constituencies against it. He begged to move the rejection of the Bill.

*MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) seconded the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. He intended, he said, to criticise the Finance Bill from a different standpoint to that which his hon. Friend had argued so eloquently. The hon. Member for Thirsk had argued the matter from the point of view of the unfair taxation of the landed interest as regarded the Death Duties, and he (Mr. Bonsor) intended to prove to the House that the increased Beer Duty which the

Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed under this Bill was practically a tax upon the agricultural industry. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech the other night took great pains to show that he had laid this tax of 6d. a barrel so that it should not fall upon the consumer, and he prided himself on the supposition that nobody would be able to say he had robbed the poor man of his beer. On that point he would only say one or two words. He wished to know where the consumer ceased to pay this indirect tax, and where the manufacturer came in? The manufacturer collected several millions per annum which he handed to the Revenue, and he had always understood he collected that tax from the consumer of the article. He should like the Chancellor of the Exchequer to inform the House where the consumer ceased to pay and where the manufacturer came in. The fact was that this tax was placed on the manufacturer on somewhat false pretences. The right hon. Gentleman said he had figures to show that the retailers and distributors of alcoholic liquor were in a position to pay this tax. He was not afraid of the right hon. Gentleman's figures, because he was in a position to know something of the profits made by the great brewers. He had taken figures from a number of the published Returns of the Limited Liability Companies, and in hardly any case did the Returns exceed 6 per cent. on the whole capital employed. In no instance, he thought, did it exceed 7 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say that was because the capital was inflated and that there was a good deal of capital on paper for goodwill, but in making his calculations he had, wherever he could, deducted the amount allowed for goodwill, and still found that 7 per cent. on the net capital was a fair calculation. He was well aware that there were some eminent firms that were making greater profits, but brewers were not the only people who made considerable profits. He had a Return of certain banking firms, every one of which showed a larger return than 6 per cent. on the capital employed. He had taken his figures from the *Stock Exchange Year Book*, which was open to everybody. He found that Parr's Bank paid 19 per cent.; the National Provincial 19; London and County 21, and so on. Out of a list of 15 banks the average percentage of profit on capital employed was 17½ per cent. And there were other manufacturing industries that greatly exceeded that percentage—for instance, the great firm of Brunner, Mond, and Co., who made a very considerable profit on what was practically a monopoly. The fact of the matter was that the right hon. Gentleman, in his endeavour to tax the brewers, was trying to do something to render himself inconvenient to them because they possibly had been rendering themselves rather inconvenient to him during the last 18 months. He was going to endeavour to show that this tax would not really fall upon the brewers. He did not say that for the first six months or so it would not be a source of great inconvenience to them, because after all brewers could not reorganise their business at a minute's notice, but brewers worked like other manufacturers, to a cost sheet—on one side was material, labour, taxes, &c.; and, on the other, the selling receipts. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that while the price of raw material had fallen the price of beer to the consumer had remained stationary. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that the tax on the raw material had been increased. And as the tax increased the price of agricultural produce fell. The Revenue had gained something like £2,000,000 a year since the Malt Duty was changed into the Beer Duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated that the 6d. a barrel on beer would bring in £580,000 out of £840,000 which it would yield if it were fully paid, consequently he reckoned on a loss of £260,000 of profit-producing material now employed in the manufacture of beer. That meant that the beer would be watered to that extent that the manufacturer at the end of his year would have £260,000 worth of material in stock, and exactly that sum less would be spent in the barley-growing districts. But this £260,000 did not mean the whole of the tax upon the agricultural industry. It was in 1880 that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian took away the Malt Duty and imposed the Beer Duty. In that year a quarter of barley as used in brewing was put at 21s. 8d., and there was an additional tax of 1s. a quarter called the old brewers' licences. That 22s. 8d. had always been taken as equivalent to 22s. a quarter, owing to the increase in the process of manufacture. In the year 1880 the Member for Midlothian removed the Malt Tax and imposed the Beer Duty, and he intended at that time to put a duty equivalent to 10d. per quarter on barley. As a matter of fact he put on something just over 2s., and a deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman in 1883 were able to prove to him that the tax really amounted to 24s. a quarter on barley as against 22s. in 1880. The right hon. Gentleman below him (Mr. Goschen) in 1889 imposed a further tax of 3d. a barrel, or 1s. a quarter, and the old Barley Duty of 22s. was raised to a sum equivalent to 25s. The present tax was equivalent to 2s. per quarter, which raised the tax on barley to something over 27s., which was very nearly cent. per cent. of the value of barley at the present time. He wished to show to the House the effect of this extra taxation. In the year 1876, during which year the biggest consumption of malt took place in this country, he found that while 58,000,000 bushels of malt were used in brewing, there were 820,000 hundredweights of sugar used. In 1880 there were 55,850,000 bushels of malt used and 1,136,434 hundredweights of sugar. In 1887 the amount of bushels of malt used in brewing had sunk to 52,319,027, whereas the hundredweights of sugar had risen to 1,465,939, while in 1893 malt was 55,654,980 bushels and sugar 2,122,611 hundredweights, sugar being nearly three times the amount it was in 1876. But the figures as regarded the prices of barley were even more extraordinary. His own barley buyer in Norfolk had dealt in the best barley in the same market for a number of years, and from his figures he found that in 1876 the average price of the best malting barley was 45s. 6d., in 1880 42s. 10d., and that in 1887 it sank to 34s., while in 1893 it fell as low as 28s. 10d. The right hon. Gentleman, he had no doubt, considered that the fall in prices was a very good reason for increasing the tax on beer and thereby further decreasing the prices of raw material. But the right hon. Gentleman was absolutely wrong when he stated that the prices of beer had not fallen. They had fallen considerably during the past 10 years, owing to the reduction of the prices of raw materials, and there was not a single brewer who was not selling his beer from 10 to 12 per cent. less than he was 10 years ago. The Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated to lose £260,000 a year by the imposition of this tax. That £260,000 was practically 2d. out of the extra 6d., and the brewer had an easy means of recouping himself for the other 4d. at the expense of the agricultural industry. According to the Return which he had just read, 55,000,000 bushels of malt were used in brewing, and there was also now a considerable amount of raw grain used for the same purpose. He would like to inform the right hon. Gentleman that malt extract for brewing cost 5d. per pound, and that the raw grain extract was 3½d. per pound. Consequently, there was every inducement to brewers to use raw grain, by which he would gain 1½d. per pound, as against English-made barley malt. The other day, at the Institute of Brewing, where those learned in the science of brewing met to discuss all subjects connected with the industry, it was decided that 10 per cent. of raw grain could be used in brewing without spoiling the article. Thus, if 10 per cent. of grain was used, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see that the brewer would be recouped at once. But this raw grain was not English barley. It was maize, sago, and rice. Consequently, if the brewer was going to recoup himself to the extent of 4d., he would be thrown upon the foreign produce in order to recoup himself for the tax imposed by the right hon. Gentleman. He hoped that Agricultural Members opposite would lay these facts and figures before their constituents, especially those in the Eastern Counties, and would inform them what was the real meaning of this Budget. An English brewer wished to use English barley, if possible; but if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to insist upon running up the taxation on beer to such a point that it could not be made from malt and hops, the brewer, like any other manufacturer, would naturally seek other ingredients. This tax had, in his opinion, been dictated more by prejudice against the brewing trade than from the mere desire to add to the Revenue. The brewers since 1880 had been partners with the Inland Revenue authorities in the collection of the Excise, and he would venture to say the Act of 1880 would never have worked smoothly and well if it had not been for the cordial co-operation of the brewers of the country with the Excise authorities. He believed there was not a single instance of any evasion of the law on the part of a brewer, and that there was not a single instance where a brewer had been brought before the Magistrate for endeavouring to evade the law, although it was a law which could very easily be evaded. As an Income Tax Commissioner in the City, he knew that many other businesses tried to evade the payment of Income Tax. The tax might fall on the brewers for the first six months, but it would eventually fall upon the agriculturists in the country, and, therefore, he cordially seconded the Amendment that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, and he hoped the Agricultural Members would do their best to endeavour to throw the Bill out.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, that the rejection of the Budget had been moved in two very interesting speeches. The hon. Gentleman who proposed the Motion always addressed the House with consummate ability, and the House always listened to him with very great pleasure and very great interest. The House had not the pleasure of often hearing the voice of the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion; but he, too, had put forward his case with remarkable ability. One thing in the combination of those two hon. Gentlemen struck him very much, and that was that the first spoke on behalf of what he believed might truly be described as the most distressed industry in the country—the agricultural industry; and the other hon. Gentleman was the spokesman of the brewing industry, which was popularly believed to be the most flourishing industry in the country. But the hon. Member for Wimbledon was able to point to an industry even more flourishing than his own—the industry of banking; which, indeed, he believed the hon. Member had fortunately also something to do with. They had, therefore, distress and prosperity linked together in opposing the Budget. Of course, hon. Gentlemen who opposed the Budget Bill occupied a very considerably more advantageous position than those to whom it fell to defend the Bill; for the reason that it was much easier to speak against an increase of taxation than to defend an increase of taxation. But he wished that hon. Gentlemen opposite who opposed this increase of taxation had remembered that such increase was inevitable when they urged the House to incur the obligation which it was intended to meet. He always listened with pain to proposals of what he should describe as profligate increases of expenditure on the armaments of the country in a time of profound peace. Everyone with patriotic instincts of course desired to see the country defended by a sufficient Navy; but he viewed with consternation and alarm the ease with which a scare was worked up with regard to the Navy. He remembered in the short Parliament hearing Lord Charles Beresford declare in the House that the £6,000,000 which had been spent by the Liberal Government to increase the armaments of the country in connection with the Penjdeh scare might just as well have been thrown into the sea for all the good they had effected. It seemed to him that the further millions they were now spending to strengthen the Army and Navy—so far as it was supposed to satisfy the aspirations of those who directed the two Services—might have been thrown into the sea also. They all thought the extra £20,000,000 that had been voted in the last Parliament a very large sum, but in this new Parliament they were increasing upon even that expenditure. But the one thing that pleased him in the Budget more than anything else was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had endeavoured to lay the burden of this increased expenditure on the right shoulders, so that those who cried out for this expenditure would have to pay for it. His hon. Friend the Member for Haggerston, when the House was being urged to further enlarge the Navy, had shown that the working men organisations of the country unanimously, or almost unanimously, declared that they did not desire this increased expenditure on preparations for war. The cry for the expenditure had come from the classes, and he, for one, was heartily glad that it was the classes that would have to pay for it. The working classes would not mind additional taxation if it were for a purpose in which they took an interest—such as old-age pensions; but with regard to this proposal to spend more money on the fighting men and less on the industrial men, he was glad that the pockets that would be applied to were the pockets of the rich rather than the pockets of the poor. He was sure it would have a wholesome effect in restraining profligate expenditure in the future, when it was realised that those who cried out for the increased expenditure would have to supply the necessary money. Turning to the general subject of the Budget, he wished to say, as a farmer, that he thought the farmers had every reason to be satisfied with the Budget. The Chancellor of the Exchequer extended the incomes exempted altogether from Income Tax from £150 a year to £160 a year, and reduced the tax by that amount on incomes up to £400, and gave a reduction also on incomes of £500. He was sorry to say that few farmers would benefit from the reduction of the tax on salaries of £400 and £500 a year. He believed the great bulk of farmers had incomes so small that they would not now be legally liable for the tax at all, and if they looked sharply after their interests in that respect they would get out of paying Income Tax altogether. He thought it was a great thing, at a time when the expenditure of the country was going up, for this large and worthy class of people to find their taxation actually going down, and in a large number of cases completely taken off their shoulders. He hoped, however, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would place the farmers of England, Ireland, and Scotland on the same footing with regard to the Income Tax by arranging that the English farmer should pay the tax not on half the rent, as at present, but on one-third the rent, like the farmers of Scotland and Ireland. That obviously would be only an equitable arrangement, and would hardly cost the Revenue any thing. He could also say, as a small landowner, that on the whole the proposals in the Budget appeared to him to be just and satisfactory. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had been able, in a time of great financial pressure and difficulty, to extend to landowners what was positively a gift—to give them a remission under Schedule (A), with regard to which they had been charged hitherto on the gross instead of on the net income. It must be felt that it had not been an equitable arrangement that a class which derived its income from any source should have been compelled to pay the tax on an amount considerably in excess of what their income really was, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in setting the matter right, deserved the hearty thanks of the landowners. It would, however, be very agreeable to the landowners, and would come well within the equities of the case, if the right hon. Gentleman saw his way to extend the 10 per cent. reduction he was allowing them under Schedule (A) a little further. In the county in which he lived the Assessment Committee of the County Council had arranged that lands with houses and buildings on them should have an abatement on the assessment of 12½ per cent. That was only a reasonable abatement. It was said that the Lancashire County Council gave an abatement of less than 10 per cent. But Lancashire was a very rich county—a county largely in grass, and a county in which the buildings were not so numerous in proportion to the acreage as in the Eastern Counties. It was also a county of stone, so that most of the farm buildings were of stone, and not so liable to need frequent repairs as the buildings in the Eastern Counties, where there was little or no stone, and where the buildings were, as a consequence, many of them of timber covered with thatch. He, therefore, respectfully submitted to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it would be only equitable if he made the abatement a little more than 10 per cent., as that figure did not really represent the difference between the gross and the net income of the landlords. He now came to the most critical part of the Budget—that part which dealt with the Death Duties. The proposal in the Bill was that real property and personal property should be treated exactly alike, and he thought that proposal appealed to the sense of equality and justice in every man. The principal objection taken against the proposal was that real property bore local burdens far heavier in extent than personalty did. But he did not think it was a good plan to keep two wrong systems going in order that one might balance the other. It was desirable that the basis of taxation should be equitable, and he could conceive no reason why, if a man were fortunate enough to inherit an estate worth £20,000, he should pay less in Death Duties than a man who inherited personal property of the same value. If there were equal treatment between realty and personalty in the case of the Death Duties, it would strengthen the case of realty in fighting the battle of equal treatment in regard to the local rates. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for having resisted the pressure that had been brought to bear on him by some hon. Members amongst his own followers to have the grants in aid of local taxation withdrawn. While it was right and fair that in regard to the Death Duties realty and personalty should stand on the same equal footing, when local rates were dealt with the like equal treatment should also be meted out to the two different classes of property. It had been shown that personalty could not be rated in the same way as real property was rated, and until some better system could be devised the plan of making grants-in-aid out of the Imperial Exchequer went some way to redress the great inequality which would otherwise exist. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for resisting the pressure which had been put upon him to abolish these grants. He also thanked the right hon. Gentleman for resisting the pressure which had been put upon him to give a free breakfast table. He (Mr. Everett) should like a free breakfast table as much as anybody else, but at the time when expenditure was going up he thought it would have been an unwise thing to have sacrificed the income derived from the Tea Duty. The mass of the people, no doubt, paid quite a sufficient share of the taxes of this country as compared with the richer classes. The taxes upon tea, tobacco, and strong drink represented half the taxation of this country, and of course the great bulk of those taxes came out of the pockets of the poor. Still, if a free breakfast table had been given there would have been no tax at all that would have reached the large and increasing number of the working classes who do not smoke nor drink beer, wine, or spirits, but refreshed themselves with milder beverages. He was sure that these worthy citizens would not wish to be exempted from the payment of their fair share of taxation, and especially if resort was had to the taxes to provide old age pensions. Coming to another point, there was no doubt a difference between real property and personal property in regard to the convenience of payment. Where a man's property consisted of cash he had only to write a cheque for the duty, or, if the property consisted of shares, he could sell a portion without injuring the remainder. Where, however, a man inherited real property he would have much more difficulty in paying the duty. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had fairly grappled with this not inconsiderable difficulty. The most obvious way for a man who inherited real property to procure money to pay the Death Duty with was to sell a portion of the property. It was not very easy, he knew, to sell agricultural land, but that very circumstance would make the charge imposed upon it a minimum charge, because there would be very little value to levy the duty upon. If the result of the proposal was to bring more land into the market, and to lead to the subdivision of estates which had recently been yearly growing larger and larger, he believed that great public benefit would ensue. Nothing had been more remarkable than the growth of the size of estates during the present century. In Suffolk, at the beginning of this century, the largest estate extended only to 6,000 or 7,000 acres, whilst now there were two or three in the county which ran up to something like 30,000 acres. The owner of one of these large estates died not long ago, leaving £300,000 to be expended on further increasing the size of the property. In connection with another estate which was close by, £200,000 had been left to be used also in enlarging it. It appeared to him that if that kind of thing went on we were not very far off the time when one man would own a whole county, and no one else would have perfect liberty and freedom within the area of that county. Under these circumstances, he did not think it would be anything but a national benefit if the operation of this Bill were to put more land into the market. The Chancellor of the Exchequer provided for cases where sales would be inexpedient by permitting an annual payment extending over eight years to take the place of the payment of a lump sum, in which case interest would be charged upon the unpaid portion of the duty. There was also the alternative of a mortgage, but no one would wish to see the mortgage system extended under this Bill, and the annual payment appeared to be the soundest method of paying where cash was not immediately available. He thought at first when he heard the proposal that the payment of interest upon the unpaid instalments would not be fair, but he confessed that, after having looked round it, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer was right in his proposal. In the end a man inheriting real property would not pay more, and probably he would hardly pay as much as if he received the inheritance in personalty and paid down a lump sum at once. On the whole, he felt quite in a congratulatory mood with regard to this Bill. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a just and fair proposal, and that he had put the burden upon the right shoulders. He did hope that the country would begin to realise that the enormous growth of expenditure, and especially that part of it which related to armaments, must be stayed. How much better it would be for a country in the happy position of this Island to suggest to the other countries of Europe mutual disarmament to some extent! The Seconder of the Amendment (Mr. Bonsor) had tried to frighten the farmers with the idea that the price of barley would be decreased still further by the imposition of the additional 6d. on beer. In order to prove that the transference of the duty from malt to beer had had such an effect the hon. Gentleman had quoted figures to show that there had been a very great fall in the price of barley since the transfer was made. If, however, the hon. Gentleman had also given the prices of wool and of meat and of live stock at the two periods he had mentioned he would have found that they had fallen greatly too, and he would also have discovered that there had been a less fall in the price of barley than in that of any other considerable agricultural product. Last year in the Eastern Counties those who were fortunate enough to get good barley had made considerably more per sack of their barley than of their wheat. He had spent a great deal of time and trouble in trying to get the Malt Tax removed. Certainly he had overlooked at that time the fact that the freeing of the mash tub was a necessary part of the change. The effect of the free mash tub had been no doubt to introduce into the manufacture of beer materials which could not have been used under the old Malt Tax, and to that extent the price of barley might have been prejudiced. Still, seeing that barley had gone down less than other products, he did not think that those who advocated the abolition of the Malt Tax had anything to reproach themselves with. He thought that the Budget would conduce to the fame of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that it would be accepted with gratitude by the people of this country, and not least by the owners and occupiers of land.

Mr. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had congratulated the agricultural interest upon the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had upheld the system of grants-in-aid. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself could hardly join in this congratulation, because grants-in-aid had more than once been the subject of denunciation on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as well as of the Secretary for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The hon. Gentleman had also said that he rejoiced at the form the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals had taken because they would place upon the shoulders of those who had demanded large naval and military armaments the cost of such armaments. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would hardly agree with the hon. Gentleman on that point either, because early this Session the right hon. Gentleman had said that the representatives of the landed interest were not prepared to bear their fair share of the cost of the Army and Navy. He (Mr. Long) could assure the hon. Gentleman that if the Government would only place their burdens fairly upon land according to the ability of the land to bear them they would not find that either the owner or the occupier of land would endeavour to avoid the burden. In his (Mr. Long's) opinion, the distribution of burdens by the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been inequitable and unjust, whilst the burden which would be thrown upon land would be a very severe one, and one that would go far to complete the ruin which was now rapidly overtaking the agricultural interest. The right hon. Gentleman, when he detailed the advantages which had been conferred upon occupiers and tenant farmers, had forgotten altogether that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) conferred upon the farmers the greatest privilege ever extended to them by allowing them to claim from payment of Income Tax under Schedule (B), and thereby to escape payment, when they could prove they had made no profit. He believed that if this advantage had been made larger use of, and if the careful keeping of accounts had been more general throughout the country, much greater benefit would have been derived from the use of the privilege than appeared to have been obtained from it. It would be convenient to consider the present Budget first from the point of view whether the new proposals would be workable and equitable, and, secondly, from the point of view whether the agricultural land of the country, on which it was sought to place an additional burden, was or was not in a position to bear that burden. The most remarkable characteristic of the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down was that, with the exception of his concluding remarks about barley, he did not attempt to meet any one of the powerfully-stated cases produced by the hon. Member for the Thirsk Division or the hon. Member for the Wimbledon Division in the numerous instances which they had given of the incidence that the proposals of this Budget would have on the landed interest. The hon. Member for Thirsk, in one of the most admirable speeches ever made in the House in defence of the landed interest, produced case after case, which he argued out so far as he was able to do so, upon the proposals as they appeared before the House. The hon. Member met these detailed and exhaustively put cases by one consoling declaration—he took comfort in the fact that as land in many parts of the country, as he, and other practical agriculturists in the House knew, was of little value, therefore the tax would realise very little. If that were true, what was to become of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposals for raising extra money by these means? To one question they had tried to get an answer from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the right hon. Gentleman told them he was unable or unwilling to answer. [Sir W. Harcourt: No.] He was not accusing the right hon. Gentleman of want of courtesy. What he meant was that they were constantly told that the change which would be made in taxation would depend upon the system of valuation. [Sir W. Harcourt: I gave the figures.] The right hon. Gentleman had said that night across the Table, in answer to a question, that the figures would depend upon the method in which the valuation was made.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I have given the figures of what I believe will be the amount yielded by agricultural land generally. The figures I have given are the result of the best calculation we can make of what the general result will be. I have not been able to take individual cases.

**Mr. W. LONG** said, he was very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his interruption. It was precisely the difficulty in which they stood that the sum ultimately payable to the State was of necessity dependent upon the value placed on the land in individual instances. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken found consolation in the fact that land would be of little value in a great many cases. He (Mr. Long) would endeavour, in the short time he should keep the attention of the House, to show what appeared to him to be at all events possible difficulties in the way of the application of the principles of this measure and serious obstacles from a practical point of view. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had more than once told the House that he did not seek to do any permanent injury to land. He, for one, earnestly accepted that assurance in the spirit in which it was given. He did not desire to accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer of any intentional wish to injure the landed classes of the country. The right hon. Gentleman reminded the House himself that he was closely connected with the land-owning class, and everybody knew that the name he bore was honoured among the land-owning class of the country. Intention, however, was one thing, and effect another, and he could not help thinking that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would do a lasting injury to the landed interest. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made his proposals, and how were they supported by hon. Members on his own side of the House? The Member for Northampton spoke in the country and declared that the proposals of the Government were going to have the effect of breaking up the large estates; and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, in the first Debate in that House on the subject, said that if landed estates could not realise the necessary money without sale, he thought it was better they should be sold. Both the hon. Member for Northampton and the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean put the matter in a plain and straightforward way. They did not deny they were opposed to the existing land system, and would be glad if one of the results of the Bill would be in some degree to break it up. The hon. Member for Northampton declared he thought it was desirable that many of those estates should be broken up, and that their succession from father to son should not be longer continued. If that was what was intended the Government should proceed in an open manner against the land of the country and deal with it in such a way as to secure this breaking up, and not proceed by means of bleeding the land to death, which would not have the effect of breaking up the large estates into small holdings. Under the plan of the right hon. Gentleman sums between three and four times more than were now payable would be paid, and would have to be got either by sale of the land or by mortgage. Having told the House that this money could be got by the sale of land the right hon. Gentleman immediately demolished his own argument by proceeding to remind the House that in the vast number of cases it was impossible to sell land at a price which would bring in the money required. The right hon. Gentleman no doubt spoke in his double capacity as an owner and occupier of land. He could tell them that a great many of those who spoke on behalf not of the owners, but of the occupying tenant farmers did not share the optimistic views of the right hon. Gentleman, and did themselves believe that these proposals were injurious to the land and to the interests of owners and occupiers, and of cultivation also. He was not going, after the speech of the hon. Member for Thirsk, to trouble the House with concrete cases. He had no doubt that, although the hon. Gentleman opposite failed to deal with them, some other Member would give attention to them, and either admit their accuracy and endeavour to justify the policy which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was pursuing, or, if not able to do that, show where his hon. Friend was in error, and in what respect he had overestimated the effect of these proposals on the land. He did not believe that the majority of hon. Members sitting opposite desired to see the landed estates of this country broken up, unless, indeed, they were prepared with an alternative policy. He would take one case only, the history of which had been much in the possession of the public recently—the case of the great Savernake property belonging to the various Lords Ailesbury. Under ordinary circumstances he did not say that that property could not bear the burden of this tax; but he asked the House to realise what was the actual condition of that estate. It had passed through an unfortunate time. It was not for him to say anything as to the causes which had brought it into its present state, or the character of the dead man who was the last possessor. At all events, that property had now passed into the hands of one who was at one time an honoured Member of that House, who would bring to bear upon its management and administration not only experience and capacity, but an earnest, solid determination to sacrifice himself in every way he possibly could in order to rehabilitate the estate which had passed to him. He ventured to say that if the present owner of the Savernake property were confronted with the difficulty of having to raise on mortgage the considerable sum of money which might be demanded under the wide clauses of this Bill—which left the method of valuation so uncertain, and which it would be impossible to pay out of income, but which must be paid either by mortgage or sale—he would find it impossible to meet the additional burden. And if some part of the estate was to be sold to pay the Death Duty, who was to say what the portion was to be? Was it to be left to the local surveyor, or decided by the Commissioners? Who was to decide in the case of a large property like this, the vast proportion of which was practically unsaleable, unless they got, as it was not likely they would get, some enormously rich man ready to come down and make an extraordinary offer for the whole estate? The present owner had a reasonable prospect of recovering the estate and placing it on sound ground again, and were they going to decline to give him the opportunity and compel him to further mortgage the property, so making the position of the successor worse than that of the present owner? They were told there was to be power of appeal; that the successor was to be called upon to pay this sum when it had been arrived at, and if he objected he might appeal. A very generous proposal this! Under what circumstances was he to appeal? He might appeal to a higher Court after he had paid the total amount of the claim. He (Mr. Long) ventured to say that, as regarded a great majority of similar properties to this, it would be a mere farce to give no power of appeal more efficacious and simple. The hon. Member for Thirsk touched upon another very important point which had been mentioned more than once, but to which he thought sufficient attention had not been given—that was, who was to pay the very large cost of valuing these estates? The principle, as he understood it, which underlay the Chancellor of the Exchequor's proposals was that real and personal property should be put absolutely on the same basis. He maintained that, altogether apart from the portion that the land bore of the rates of the country, the right hon. Gentleman was attempting what was practically impossible. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that in many cases in connection with the existing Estate Duty the valuation was carried out in much the same way as was proposed under this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman must, however, admit that his proposals involved a gigantic change. Upon the mode of valuation would depend the amount of increased duty that was to be paid. He maintained that it was almost impossible to find landed properties in this country which were occupied or owned on equal or similar conditions, and he did not understand how this valuation was to be made in the careful and exhaustive way in which it ought to be made, and how the actual value was to be arrived at. If they were going to carry out this proceeding by the careful and exhaustive method of inquiry and examination now adopted, all he could say was that his hon. Friend behind him had not in the smallest degree exaggerated the heavy cost that would have to be paid for such valuation by competent valuers. He would remind the House that when the local surveyor or valuer was called upon to do work of this kind he not only had to make a professional valuation as to what the property was then worth, but in the case of land he had to run what he might call a considerable professional risk in saying what would be the value of that land within a reasonable period; and valuers would tell them there was nothing so difficult, and no more anxious task, than that which they were called upon to perform when they were asked to value estates under the present extraordinarily complicated condition of the land in this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had also told them that in arriving at the value of these estates the valuer would be called upon to value as between a willing purchaser and a willing seller in the open market. [Sir W. HARCOURT dissented.] That was what he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say when he questioned him upon the matter. [Sir W. HARCOURT: No.] He had done his best to follow this matter from the first night that the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced it, and he had been present on every occasion when there had been discussion upon it or questions asked and answered, and had endeavoured to follow the right hon. Gentleman's explanations as to what the provisions in this respect were to be. If that was not to be the basis, then he confessed the difficulties in which they found themselves were much greater than appeared. He certainly thought they were to take it that the valuer would put upon the property such a value as he would recommend a willing purchaser to give to a willing seller, and then, having arrived at the principal value of the estate for the purpose of these Death Duties, there would be deducted therefrom everything that could be considered a fair charge upon the estate; in other words, that the mortgages were to be deducted. He imagined it would be impossible to deduct from the capital value any charge in regard to upkeep of the property. [Sir W. HARCOURT: That is done now.] It was very difficult to find out what was the cost of the up-keep of an estate. Let them take the practical case of a man succeeding to a property, whose value was estimated at several hundred thousand pounds. He would be called upon to pay a very large sum yearly in repayment of capital and interest in respect of work done for the improvement of the property, and he should be glad if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tell them whether he would be entitled to deduct the capitalised value of that annual payment from the principal value, and whether he would be entitled to say that although the estate had a net value of £200,000 or £300,000 that having to spend £2,000 or £3,000 a year that should be deducted from the amount. That was a very important question to owners of landed property in this country. It was a difficulty which had puzzled wiser heads than his, and no solution had yet been arrived at.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Does the hon. Gentleman mean money borrowed—for drainage, for instance?

MR. W. LONG said, that drainage was a case in point. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and many hon. Members knew that 25 or 30 years ago it was generally believed that one of the obstacles in the way of agricultural prosperity was that insufficient money had been spent on these properties by their owners, and the owners of that time determined to get rid of that difficulty, and borrowed large sums of money which now constituted heavy burdens, which had to be met annually. He wanted to know whether on succeeding to an estate the tenant-for-life would be entitled to deduct from the capital value of the estate the amount of the money he had annually to repay? He understood that perhaps in a few cases the expenditure of this money had produced a return, but unfortunately in the vast number of instances the tenants were paying large sums annually without any return, the rents being lower, and the outlay having been wasted for the simple reason that what was thought then to be most advantageous to the agricultural interest in the way of a wise expenditure of money, had turned out to be delusive, and left the occupier in a worse condition than if none of these improvements had been made. Therefore, he would point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if the successor was to be called upon to pay this tax, regardless of the fact that he might have for the next 20 years to pay £2,000 or £3,000 for so-called improvements of the property, which had left him so much poorer and the property no better, a great hardship would be inflicted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, and some hon. Gentlemen behind him repeated, that the difficulty of this payment would be met either by sale of land, or mortgage. He wanted to put another practical difficulty before the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [Sir W. HARCOURT: It can be paid by instalments.] He was sure hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House must be able to recall numerous instances where facts had occurred in the way in which he was about to briefly explain. Was it not the fact that in regard to the great majority of landed estates in this country, under the law as it stood now, when the owner succeeded, he was compelled sometimes for two or three years, and even for a longer period of time, largely to reduce the expenditure of his predecessor, to give up a good deal of the things that his predecessor was in the habit of doing, and to carefully economise in order to pay the Death Duties as they existed at the present time? That was a fact which everybody must know who took note of what was going on around them. If that was the case now, how would it be in the future, when the Death Duties were increased three or four times? Not only must a man economise as at present, but he might have to leave his home, or realise the capital value, in order to discharge the mortgage. There were many inequalities and injustices that would be inflicted by this Bill. It appeared to be the object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of a good many other people who had talked and written upon this subject, to throw the burden of taxation on those who were rich and well able to pay. He told the right hon. Gentleman and his friends, however, that they were not going to effect that object by this Budget. He had heard—the unfortunate landowners knew nothing of it but what they heard —that there were men in this country who possessed more than £1,000,000; some of them £2,000,000 or £3,000,000; and they had heard that some of them sat in that House on the Benches opposite. That might explain why the right hon. Gentleman drew the line at £1,000,000. He could understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer so graduating the Income Tax that these very rich persons should pay more towards the burden of taxation, instead of endeavouring to catch the unfortunate landowners. He did not think it could be maintained that land did not already pay its fair share, but if it did not the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have gone boldly in for a system of graduated duties which would have caught these extremely rich men. He would like to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a case which would show some of the inequalities of the system. A landowner who had property worth £10,000, and had one child, as he understood, that child would have a Death Duty to pay of £300. In another case, where the property was worth £100,000, if there were 10 children, the Death Duty payable would be at the rate of £600 for each child.

Sir W. HARCOURT said, the duty was payable on the whole estate without regard to the number of children amongst whom it was divided.

Mr. W. LONG said, the right hon. Gentleman was proposing grave changes in the Death Duties of the country, and he thought it was advisable, while he was doing so, that he should redress some inequalities which appeared to him to be unjust. How could the right hon. Gentleman defend his position in adding very largely to the Death Duties incidental to the succession to real estate, and, at the same time, introducing into his rearrangement existing anomalies and injustices? It practically came to this — that although the right hon. Gentleman called it a Death Duty, he was laying a burden not upon the original owner of the property, but upon the unfortunate successors who might be called upon to pay, not in proportion as they succeeded, but in proportion to the wealth left behind him by the person who had owned the property. That was an injustice which the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well have remedied, and it would have been something to put before them as consolation for the inequalities of this Bill. He wanted to say one word with reference to some remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. He was not going to discuss with the right hon. Gentleman the question of hereditary burdens. They had heard a good deal about them, and if they once got into that discussion no one knew better than he did that it would be an involved and long one. He said, when it came to hereditary burdens, that he thought they on that side of the House who contended in the interest of real estates could prove, where there was any hereditary transmissions of burdens at all, it did not exist so much in the case of personal as of real property. Their contention was that real estate bore an unfair share of taxation. The Secretary for India quoted from a Return prepared by one of the ablest officials in the Public Service, which showed, in the first instance, that the relief which had recently been given to local taxation had been plainly to the relief of the rural rather than the urban ratepayers—for this reason, that they held, as they held now, that the rural part of the land of this country was less able to pay the burden of taxation now than it used to be. They felt, in the second place, that the rural ratepayer got less in the way of return for his rates than the urban ratepayer. He did not care whether they took the case of police or highway rates or whatever was the expenditure out of the rates, large or small, the urban ratepayer got a direct benefit from the money spent which was altogether out of proportion to any advantage derived by the rural ratepayer. He would go further, and say that not only did the urban ratepayer get a benefit much in excess of anything obtained by the rural ratepayer, but in a great many cases, and particularly in regard to police rates, the rural ratepayer was burdened with the cost of maintaining police, a large proportion of the services of whom went almost solely to the towns. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Woodbridge Division had told them that the question of rates was a landowners' question, and not a farmers' question, and that if they granted money in aid of rates it went into the hands of the owner, and not of the farmer. He held in his hand the Report of a large gathering of farmers held in his own county not long ago which contained a most excellent paper, which was read by a well-known tenant farmer, a man of exceptional ability, and well known in the neighbourhood. What he said was heartily endorsed by many other farmers. Throughout the whole of that address, Mr. George Blake, a well-known occupying tenant-farmer, stated plainly that this question was not an owners' question, but that it was the question of the occupier and the labourer, and that it would be difficult to find an owner who had realised any benefits from the grants in aid. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India made a calculation which brought the rates of the country down to something a little over 3s. in the £1, and he told them of a remark made by Mr. Howard, a friend of his, that even if all this large sum were knocked off, it would be of very little use to the agriculturist. He did not know of what time Mr. Howard spoke, but probably it was some few years ago when the condition of land and the conditions of the burdens of the country were very different to what they were now; but the right hon. Gentleman himself would admit that where the rent amounted to no larger a sum than 5s. or 6s. an acre, out of which 2s. 6d. or 3s. had to be paid in tithes, and out of which the outgoings of the estate had also to be paid, an extra burden of 3s. or 3s. 6d. per acre for rates was a very considerable burden, and one well worth the attention of the tenant-farmer and the landlord. There were thousands and thousands of acres of land where the rent did not exceed 5s. 6d. or 6s. an acre, and there were cases in which land had gone so low as 2s. 6d. or 3s. Was anyone going to say that a large reduction would not be of considerable benefit where land had fallen to so low a value as that? Mr. Blake, in his paper, urged this from another point of view. He said it might be suggested that 1s. or 2s. per acre in relief of taxation would not ameliorate their condition, but his reply to that was that the very pursuit of their calling depended upon small economies of that sort. It was no use pooh-poohing small recommendations. Although the revision of the taxation imposed on land would not bring back prosperity or might not amount to a large measure of relief, at all events it would bring some relief which would be appreciated by every agriculturist, whether tenant-farmer, owner, or labourer. It was unfair in times like this not only to refuse relief but to actually throw increased burdens on the land. Hon. Gentlemen opposite who supported the policy of the Budget Bill, thinking it would break up the large estates, were entirely mistaken and misguided. It would not break up the large estates. [*Cheers.*] But why? Because, in the main, they were in present circumstances absolutely unsaleable, and no one would saddle himself with the responsibilities and difficulties connected with the ownership of land in such precarious times. In his opinion, the Death Duties payable in respect of the majority of estates were heavy enough. In many cases a man succeeding to an estate in these days had to practice rigorous economy on account of the Death Duties and other charges, but the necessity for that economy would henceforth be doubled and trebled and quadrupled. And who was it that would feel most the rigid economies which landed proprietors would have to practice if increased burdens were forced upon them? It would not be so much the man who would no longer have a horse to ride, or the groom who would no longer have his weekly wages? The Chancellor of the Exchequer might have laid the burden on shoulders which really would be able to bear it instead of on the land of the country, which was unable to bear it either with justice to itself or to the numerous classes dependent upon the land.

Mr. C. HOBHOUSE (Wilts, Devizes) said, he did not propose to go into the question of whether the amount which would be contributed to the Imperial Revenue through the Death Duties should fall upon real or personal estate. He did not consider the question at all arguable. He would confine himself to the present proposals of the Government. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, who claimed to represent the agricultural interest, spoke from one point of view and one only, and that was the landlords'. They were the rent-receiving and not the rent-paying part of the community. According to a Return of the amount of land farmed by landowners in this country, he found that out of some three-quarters of a million of occupiers, only 14 per cent. owned the land which they farmed, and for that reason, if for no other, it might be said that hon. Gentlemen as a whole who sat in this House representing the agricultural community only represented the land-owning class. It was remarkable that while great objection had been taken to the increased duties payable by land, none at all had been taken to the increased duties payable by personalty. They all lamented the present depreciation in agriculture, but trade was depressed as well as agriculture; therefore, if additional taxes had to be raised it was fair that both realty and personalty should bear their just proportion. What were the objections taken by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite to increased charges on the land? They were partly sentimental and partly practical. The sentimental part of the case had been put before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford and the hon. Member who had just sat down, whilst the practical part had been more particularly dealt with by the hon. Member for Thirsk. The sentimental objection was that if increased charges were laid upon the land the land would have to be let to commercial gentlemen. That argument came strangely from the Party who only three or four days ago boasted that they were supported by the commercial part of the community; and it was to him an extraordinary thing that hon. Gentlemen opposite should object in times of agricultural depression to commercial and business men of wealth and activity going into the country and employing their wealth and activity for the benefit of the country side. It was said that acts of charity would cease. Well, he did not think so badly of the commercial classes as to believe that if they hired or purchased places in the country they would immediately cut off all the charities of their agricultural predecessors. Such a sneer at the new men seemed to him to be in curious taste from the hon. Members opposite, when they considered that the greatest part of the wealth of the country had been built up by the commercial classes. These taunts and fears were not new things. They were always uttered on these occasions. The hon. Member for the West Derby Division warned the House that under the new burdens upon landowners charities would cease.

Mr. W. LONG said, he had said nothing about charities, although they had been mentioned by someone else. His experience was that where landlords were driven away they always continued their charities.

Mr. C. HOBHOUSE said, the hon. Member had, at any rate, said that wages would cease, because grooms would be driven out of employment. But grooming a horse was not the only employment open to a man, and if some of these extensive estates were broken up and sold in small portions it would be open to a man to cultivate some of the land for his own benefit instead of grooming a horse for his master's benefit. A concrete example had been given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. He had mentioned an estate of £500,000 in value bringing in a yearly rental of £14,000, with a mortgage of £300,000 on it, the interest payable on which was £12,000, the net income of the owner being £2,000.

Mr. CHAPLIN: That case was a quotation from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian. It was not my case.

Mr. C. HOBHOUSE said, he was sorry if he had made a mistake. He took the statement from *The Times* the other day, and regretted if he had not taken it down correctly. What would be the charge on an estate so situated. The owner would not have to pay on the whole value, but only on the £200,000, or the unmortgaged portion. The charge at 6½ per cent. would be £13,000. It would be open to the owner to pay the £13,000 in two ways. He could do it either in eight instalments of £1,650 a year, or in one lump sum. If the former method were adopted the owner's income would be reduced from £2,000 a year to £350. And supposing it was, the result would most likely be beneficial. The owner would most likely be turned into a useful citizen—a producer rather than a consumer of wealth. If he were reduced to that necessity there would not be a great deal to be sorry for. But supposing the owner paid the sum of £13,000 down in one lump sum. He would, perhaps, have to sell an outlying portion of the estate, and if he did that and some of the mortgaged superabundant acres were let loose and acquired by the rural population, no great hardship would be done either to the individual or the State. Some one had said that great estates were a buffer between labourers and destitution; but the district he represented consisted entirely of large estates, and he was sorry to say that during the past winter in many parts of that district the labourers' wages had fallen as low as 8s. a week. If the large estates there had stood between the labourer and destitution it was an act for which the labourers were not very grateful. He confessed that if it was possible to break up estates by means of increasing the Death Duties he should not look forward with regret or dread to the change when it took place. It was not small quantities of land which would be heavily taxed under the proposal of the Government, but large aggregations of land—the keeping together of land in large estates. He thanked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the remissions of taxation he had given them. They were remissions which would be sensibly felt, and would in great measure make up for the increased duties which, undoubtedly, land would have to pay. The only question was how much would the duties amount to, and how far they ought to be imposed on land. He believed that in the first case they would be found to be much less than was imagined, and in the second case it was only fair that land should pay some part of the increased expenses for defensive purposes. It had been said that the increased charges on land would be very heavy, and that the great estates would have to pay fourfold. He would give the figures, which he had received from an Insurance Company, with regard to three typical estates—two belonging to landed gentry and one to the working man. The first was the case of an estate worth just under £10,000, with a rental of £300. Under the old scale the Succession Duty would have amounted to £63, and the Estate Duty to £100. Under the Bill there would be one simple charge of 4 per cent., amounting to £400, so that the difference against the present proprietor would be £237. At the age of 30 he could insure for that sum by an annual payment of £3 6s. 8d., and as he would receive a commission on his Income Tax of 30 per cent., or £1 per annum, the total annual charge he would have to pay in order to meet the new Death Duties would be something like 15s. per cent. of his income. His next case was that of an estate worth just over £100,000, and bringing in a rental of £3,000. The old duty would have been £1,500, and the new charge would be £5,500. The owner would receive a remission of Income Tax amounting to £12, and in order to insure himself against the difference between the old and the new duty he would, at the age of 44, have to pay £99, so that the total charge for the new duty would be 3¼ per cent. on his annual income. Then he would take the case of a working man who lived in his own house worth £300. The Death Duty on that property would be £3; but he would receive a remission of Income Tax amounting to 8s. a year, so that in seven years he would save the amount of the duty, and therefore in his case there would be no extra charge. If these figures were correct it was a great exaggeration to say, as Lord Salisbury had said at Trowbridge on Thursday, that the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would amount to a charge of 10 per cent. on land. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had done something for the smaller taxpayers by giving them a rebate on the Income Tax, but there was another thing he might do. He might reduce the scale upon which the farms of English farmers were valued. He had not been able to find out how this would work, but he was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman would adopt the suggestion he would earn the thanks of the members of a struggling community.

*Mr. BIDDULPH (Herefordshire, Ross) wished to appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for justice on behalf of the landowners. He had already given them some relief in the form of rebate on the Income Tax, but he (Mr. Biddulph) failed to see why they should continue to be charged under Schedule (A) and on woods under Schedule (B). The landowners only made profit under Schedule (A), and if the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to relieving them under Schedule (B) they would be very grateful to him for it.

Mr. USBORNE (Essex, Chelmsford) wished to say a word or two in regard to the tax on beer. He desired to show that there were two sides to the question, and that the arguments used in favour of the imposition of the tax were not so strong as they had been represented to be. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said it was an indirect tax on the public, and was to be levied to counterbalance the direct taxes proposed in the Budget, that it was a direct tax on the wealthy brewers, that the profits of the trade were so great that they could afford to pay the impost, and that the extra tax ought not to be felt by the brewers owing to the price of barley. It was suggested that a publican in England might recoup himself the amount of the tax on spirits by diluting them, but if a publican diluted spirits below a certain point he would be liable to a prosecution and conviction.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Not if he announces the fact that they are diluted.

Mr. USBORNE said, he was quite aware the right hon. Gentleman had said he had in his mind a circular issued by Messrs. Gilbey, which advertised whisky at 52 under proof, but that was a very different matter. He understood his own business, but he did not profess to understand that of Messrs. Gilbey. From his great experience he was confident that it would never do to try and get back the extra 6d. by reducing the spirits. Then he complained that the abolition of the Malt Tax was a great grievance; the new Beer Duty was not a duty on beer at all, but was a duty on barley, and for that reason was a great and grievous burden upon the farmers of England.

Sir W. HARCOURT: What I said was that the Malt Duty was removed at the earnest request of the farmers; that year after year their great grievance was the existence of the tax.

Mr. USBORNE said, that the majority of the farmers who agitated for the abolition of the tax thought they would get the removal of the tax *in toto* from the barley. There were a number of farmers, the more intelligent, who did not agitate or expect that, but whatever the farmers expected they did not expect that getting off a 22s. tax would mean the putting on of another tax of 24s., and now it was proposed to make the tax 27s. It was said that the tax was too small in amount to be split up into fractions, and that being so it was in the power of the brewers to recoup themselves by pumping more water into the copper. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if the brewers would water their profits instead of the beer everyone would be satisfied, and all would go right. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he had considered what the profit amounted to that had to be watered? A country brewer would not turn out more than 10,000 barrels of beer in a year, which was only what a London brewer sent out in a day, and, therefore, the whole profits of the business of a country brewer, including the rent received for the houses, would not, with a tax of 6d. per barrel, amount to more than 6 per cent. on the whole income of the business. And yet the right hon. Gentleman considered that the profit upon beer was so great that it could well afford to bear the weight of the tax. The fact was that the profit on beer was considerably less than upon any other article sold to the trade. When an article was sold at a low rate, the sale must be enormous in order that there should be any profit at all. For instance, what was the percentage of profit upon newspapers. He had inquired. He had made inquiries that morning, and found that 13 papers were sold to the retailers for 9d., so that for his 9d. the retailer got 1s. 1d. The profit on matches was the same, but what was the profit on soda water, for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had lately expressed a preference? The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the profits on beer and spirits in various parts of London was 100 per cent. He (Mr. Usborne) had no hesitation in saying that statement was most misleading—not on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, but that the information upon which he founded his statement must have been misleading; and he would explain how it might have arisen. He had been to a meeting of the trade that afternoon, when it was shown that the profits upon both beer and spirits were about 25 per cent. But how had the right hon. Gentleman arrived at the remarkable figures he had given them? If they took rum, that was a spirit on which it was impossible for a retailer to get a profit exceeding 25 per cent. The right hon. Gentleman had treated exceptional cases. He (Mr. Usborne) was told that the gentleman who gave the information to the right hon. Gentleman stated that the profit in Regent Street was about 176 per cent on brandy, and he made it out in this way: He went into the Hotel Continental and ordered a small glass of brandy, for which he paid 2s. 6d. That was purely an exceptional transaction, and an exceptional transaction could be shown to produce a profit of any percentage they liked. In the same way, if a man in the East End of London asked for 6d. of the best special and a split soda, he paid a price that yielded a large gross profit; but if they asked what profit was got out of 4d. ale they would find it was very small.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The price that my informant paid was 4d., and the profit on that was 213·4 per cent.

MR. USBORNE said, the right hon. Gentleman would not get any one in the trade to accept that as true. The right hon. Gentleman quoted his own case, going into a railway refreshment room and buying a glass of bitter ale for 2d., and the right hon. Gentleman appealed to him and said he would admit that such ale could be bought for 48s. a barrel, consequently there was a profit of 96 per cent. on the transaction. Admitting, for the sake of argument, it was 100 per cent., was 1d. on the transaction a very large profit to be made under the circumstances? But then they must take into account the enormous expense that the contractor who sold the beer was put to. He could assure the House that supposing 1d. was the gross profit in the first instance, the expenses the contractor was put to would reduce his profit to a halfpenny; yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered this was a trade that required to be further taxed, because when he went into a first-class refreshment room the fortunate individual who had a transaction had made a halfpenny out of it. He would really recommend the Chancellor of the Exchequer to look a little more closely into the profits that were made by the trade. If the right hon. Gentleman had bought soda water instead of a glass of ale, at the lowest price he would have paid 3d. for it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: What I said was that the retailer made 48s. profit on a barrel of beer; that a man who buys a barrel of beer at 48s. sells it in point of fact for 96s.

MR. USBORNE quite admitted that that was so, but he took it that out of the 48s. the net profit was not more than a halfpenny per glass on the transaction. But supposing the right hon. Gentleman bought, instead of the beer, a glass of soda water, let him point out what the gross profit of that would be. He had written to a manufacturer of soda water, and the reply he received was that the plant of the firm could turn out 1,000 dozens of soda water, which gave three grains of soda to each bottle, and nothing else beside water was put in. To make the required amount of gas they used 56 lbs. of whiting with the necessary proportion of sulphuric acid, bringing the total cost for materials up to 7s. for 1,000 dozens of soda water, manufacturing charges £10. The selling price of that to the trade customers was £41 13s. 4d., and the price obtained from the public at 2d. per bottle was £100; therefore, if they charged 3d. per bottle there would be a profit of £150 upon a gross cost of 7s. Then there was the question of the fall that had taken place in the price of barley, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer considered made the time favourable for increasing the tax upon barley. He could assure the House that the fall in the price of barley, and the consequent fall in other farm produce, had been for the large brewers the most disastrous thing that had occurred for the last 10 years. The net profits of the country brewer had during these 10 years fallen at least 50 per cent. He should only be too glad if barley was 40s. a quarter instead of 30s. a quarter, because then the labourers would have some money to spend, and the country brewers would reap some advantage from the increased prosperity. Speaking for himself, and he believed for all small country brewers, he wished to say that if there was to be heavy taxation they wished to bear it *pro ratâ* with their richer brethren; but Conservative brewers—and most brewers were Conservatives—had a most violent objection to graduated taxation, and they believed it was a tax upon thrift and enterprise.

*MR. SPICER (Monmouth, &c.) said, he would not enter into a discussion with the Member who had just spoken, but he had ventured to intrude for a few moments on the time of the House because of the speech delivered by the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool (Mr. W. Long). The hon. Member speaking from the Front Opposition Bench, and as a landowner, seemed to look at the matter of the Death Duties from the standpoint of the agricultural interests, and even in that took a one-sided view, for, after all, what was the hon. Member's contention? The hon. Member blamed the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for imposing an increase of Death Duties on these landed estates, and gave them as an example the great Savernake estate, which, the hon. Member said, had been before the public during the last few months, or even years. The argument of the hon. Member was, that if an estate, which had been managed either well or ill, was left to an individual with insufficient income to keep it up it was a hardship that he should be called on either to sell a portion of that estate, and, if necessary, to live in a reduced way to what his predecessors had done. In taking the Savernake estate he thought the hon. Gentleman was taking an estate that would not create much sympathy, because it was an instance of an estate that had been frittered away by its owners. When a man in any other walk of life was left property, whether it was a manufactory or a business which he was unable to keep up, it was not thought hard that he should be called upon to sell such part as would enable him to keep up the remainder. Some of them might not be largely interested in agricultural land, though they had some interest in it, and knew what falling prices meant; but, after all, the great desideratum in regard to agricultural land appeared to be that they wanted those to have the property who could spend something on it, and who were not attempting to manage an estate where they had not capital enough for the purpose. The hon. Member and other hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House ran only the agricultural landowner, and did not mention the case of the great urban landowners, and he also noticed that when hon. Members got up on that side of the House to launch proposals with regard to land, they always spoke from the standpoint of the agricultural landowner. He thought hon. Gentlemen made a mistake in not drawing a distinction between the agricultural and the urban landowners, because since Free Trade had been introduced their interests were largely divergent, and if each would fight their own battle it would be better for them in the long run. If there was one thing that more than another was being felt as a hardship at the present time, and which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had, for the first time, shown them the way to deal with, it was that a great injustice was being done to the dwellers in the large towns by the ground landlords taking a large portion of the fruits of their toil. The largest of the boroughs which he represented, the town of Newport, belonged very largely to one nobleman. Let him say he did not believe there was a nobleman in the country who more truly did his duty by his estate than Lord Tredegar; he admitted frankly that Lord Tredegar conscientiously tried to do right in the great trust that had been committed to him, but what was the feeling of the large majority of the people in that town? It was the feeling that had sent him to represent the constituency instead of the gentleman who formerly represented them, and who sat on the opposite side of the House. He went into the town of Newport without a single commercial interest in it, and almost without a friend, whereas the gentleman who represented them, now unfortunately deceased, had a large stake in the commercial interest of the town, and yet he (Mr. Spicer) stood here to-day largely, he believed, as the Representative of the constituency, because of the hardship the people of Newport felt with regard to Lord Tredegar's position in the town. That town had grown very largely with the increased development of commerce, and especially because it was the port of shipment for coal from the Western Valley of Monmouthshire. A few years ago it was a small town, but the Corporation did their best to develope its resources, and it had increased. But what the people felt was that land which a few years ago possessed but an agricultural value was made more valuable by their labour, and yet the greater part of that value went to swell the large income of the ground landlord. This was not a question of personality. There could not be a better instance of a town, the ground landlord of which was esteemed by all parties, and yet it was felt that he was allowed by the laws of this country to put an immense burden on the people. They were coming to the end of a number of leases—already a great many renewals had been made, of course, at a large increase, and many of those who had accepted new leases rather than give up the goodwill of their businesses were finding that when they had gone to the expense of erecting new shops and buildings they were called upon to pay not only a ground rent largely in excess of what they were paying before, but also interest on the capital which they had been compelled to pay upon the new property, and they felt that in future they were going to work largely for the ground landlord, and very little for themselves. It was very difficult in this country to impose new taxation on ground values. They had had the subject of betterment frequently discussed in that House, and he had always felt that whenever they had betterment from public improvements they also had worsement, therefore unless they could lay the new burdens on the actual ground landlords they would do somebody an injustice. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, he believed, had found a remedy, and one which would gradually be a great relief to the taxpayers of this country. Anybody who knew the Metropolitan district of Essex knew that during the last few years there had been an enormous development of the urban population in this district, and they had had the labour of the East of London and the City going over into the Metropolitan District. In that district to-day land, which was formerly in cultivation as market gardens at £4 per acre, was now worth in some cases thousands of pounds per acre. Under the present system they were tempting land speculators to go down to a district like that, to buy land practically at agricultural value, throw it out of cultivation, make it waste and throw it out of the labour of human beings. This land was speculated upon very often years before it was required for building; it lay for years bringing in nothing to the State, and the State rewarded the owner for leaving it unoccupied. The man who spent money on an estate for the purpose of developing it had to pay rates as he improved it, but the man who let his estate go waste or lie idle waiting for a rise in value, had to pay no rates whatever. He knew of a property less than one-half of a mile from the Bank of England the owners of which kept it unoccupied for 30 years so that they might get the price they asked for it, and then at the end of that period when by reason of the public and other improvements around it reached the enhanced value they put upon it, they sold it, but during the 30 years they did not pay a single penny for rates. The bright feature of the Budget, in his view, was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had shown them how, perfectly fairly to all interests in the future, to get some share of taxation from the great landowners of this country and to do it also in a way that would lead to the better development of these estates, and which would consequently tend to the general prosperity of the country as a whole.

*MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he should not dwell much upon the agricultural land question, as it had already been considerably discussed, but would address himself principally to a larger and more general view of the Bill, as the financial statement of the year. In the first place, he would point out that a remarkable change had been made in the name given to the Bill this year. It was called, contrary to the practice of many years, the Finance Bill, instead of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. Some might say that the matter of the name was of small importance, but it must be obvious that if a Bill which had been known for generations as the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill changed its name suddenly in one year and became the Finance Bill, it would be difficult to trace it in future years, and the difficulty would be increased by not knowing the reason of the change. He had ventured to suggest to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should call it the Customs and Inland Revenue and Finance

Bill; and the right hon. Gentleman in reply said that there was a good deal in the title "Finance Bill" that at first sight was not apparent. That answer led him to look carefully into the matter, and he discovered that under it lay the great principle of tacking on to the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill part No. 6, which dealt with the alteration in the National Debt and the suspension of certain parts of the Bill, about which he would say a few words later on. If precedent had been followed this change would have been embodied in a separate Bill, and would have received separate consideration. But leaving that subject, he should like to deal with the Bill as a whole, and consider the main principles which the Bill specially developed this year. There were three main principles in the Bill, which, though some of them were not strictly new, were for the first time developed in an extensive manner. First, there was the systematising of the plan of graduated taxation. Of course, that was not a new question altogether, but, in the systematic arrangement proposed in the Bill, it was a practically new point. Secondly, there was the assimilation of real and personal property for the purposes of taxation; and, thirdly, there was the indirect and partial acknowledgment that capital was to pay more than an industrial income under the system of graduated taxation. Those three main principles of the Bill he had in the abstract always advocated and acknowledged to be fair and just. But the real question lay in the way they were to be administered; for unless the details of the mode of carrying out those principles were strictly fair and just, the principles themselves would really become instruments of injustice. He approved of a system of graduated taxation, of the principle of taxation according to the ability of the person paying the tax. It was obviously fair that a larger percentage of taxation should be placed on large rich estates than on small estates; but he thought there was a system of graduated Death Duties much fairer than the system proposed in the Bill, and that was that taxation should depend not only on the gross amount left, but on the amount of benefit which any individual received from the estate he inherited. When a man was left a large sum it was not unfair that he should pay a larger percentage of taxation than the man who was left a small sum. Suppose a testator were to leave him £100,000, he should be more willing to pay a larger percentage of taxation than if the same individual had only left him £1,000. But under the Bill, if a man had two sons, and left one £1,000 and the other £10,000, the two sons would have to pay exactly the same percentage. There should be a graduated scale of taxation, not only according to the *corpus* of the estate, but according to the amount an individual was left under the estate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say he would like that, but the two principles should be worked together, in order to get a proper system. Possibly such a system would lead to a greater subdivison of property, and that would be a good thing; for, in his opinion, the more people that derived benefit from property, the better for the State. Though he did not think the accumulation of property in the hands of a few individuals should be stopped by artificial or unjust means, the tendency of legislation should be to level up from the bottom. The question then that arose under the Bill was whether the scale of graduated taxation was a fair one? He found that the scale rapidly grew at the bottom instead of at the top. Of course, he was aware why that was done. The fact was that it was from the bottom of the scale that the Chancellor of the Exchequer really derived the larger part of his receipts. The smaller fortunes in the aggregate brought in more annually than the exceptionally big ones. The scale was that up to £500 1 per cent. was imposed, and from £500 to £1,000 2 per cent. was imposed. An estate of £500 up to £1,000 had absolutely to pay double the tax of an estate under £500. Then from £1,000 to £10,000 another 1 per cent. was added; and an estate under £25,000 in value had to pay 4 per cent.; while whether a man left £500,000 or £1,000,000 the increase in the tax was only 10s. per cent. He would urge that the small graduations of the scale should be at the bottom rather than at the top; and he hoped that in Committee the fullest attention would be paid to the matter. Leaving the great question of graduated taxation, he wished to say a few words on a most important point—namely, the question of valuation. The authority that was to do the valuation under the Bill was the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. He appealed to the experience of hon. Members whether they could say that that was a strictly impartial tribunal. He himself had very strong views about it. His experience of the Inland Revenue Authorities was that they not only extracted the uttermost farthing, but went beyond it if they could. Anybody who had to deal with them would agree with him that in entrusting the Inland Revenue officers with this valuation they were trusting to people—of course, it was their business—who would put the highest value they possibly could on anything that came before them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave them an example about a certain picture. He mentioned that a picture of a young lady, by Reynolds, was sold at auction for £8,000, whereas the picture of a statesman and a Prime Minister by the same artist was sold for about £400. The right hon. Gentleman gave that as a remarkable instance of the astuteness of persons who were in the habit of valuing properties. He would ask whether it was the experience of anybody who had anything to do with the Inland Revenue that they would have taken that view of the relative value of these two pictures? He was sure that if two pictures were submitted to them for valuation of about the same size, and painted by the same artist, they would come to the conclusion that although one was the picture of a Prime Minister, and the other that of a young lady unknown, they were, roughly speaking, about the same value, and they would never dream of setting the value of the one at a sum 18 to 20 times in excess of the other. Supposing they had two pictures by Sir John Millais, one of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and one of a Miss Smith, was it conceivable that if they came before the officers of the Inland Revenue the latter would be valued at 18 or 20 times more than the former? He decidedly thought it would not be so. According to such a valuation the portrait of one anonymous lady would be regarded by the Inland Revenue as worth the portraits of every one of the Members of the present Cabinet. They must judge of what would be the method of valuation under this Bill by the experience of the past. He did not hesitate to say that valuations put upon Income Tax in the past had been unfair, and excessive, and arbitrary. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, in this Bill left them entirely to the Inland Revenue officers for the most important and vital matter of the valuation of these estates and property. He would draw attention to this fact. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had this year for the first time made some allowance for repairs to house property, and he might say that, having advocated that reform for many years, he thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having done so. Let him remind the House that Chancellors of the Exchequer had acknowledged for many years that the system was unfair under which nothing was allowed for repairs; but although the Income Tax was imposed in 1842, they had had to wait until 1894 before this obviously unfair treatment was removed. This unfair valuation had been going on, therefore, for 52 years, and now they were suddenly asked to believe that the Inland Revenue Authorities would at once adopt a fair system of valuing the estates which came under particular clauses of this Bill. He thought that, bearing in mind what had occurred in the past, this Bill should contain some distinct Rules showing how the valuation was to be made. No doubt it would add to the difficulties of the Bill, but he thought in some way they would be bound to see that there were clauses put in to enable them to know on what principle and basis the various classes of property were to be valued when this Bill came into force. Take the question of Irish land. The way of valuing Irish land at the present time would depend entirely upon the particular fancy and political views of the persons who were engaged to value it. Would the land be estimated at its selling value? If so, how would they get over the difficulty that Irish land was not saleable, and that, therefore, the selling value of Irish land was *nil*? That was the case also with regard to considerable quantities of English land, and here again also the valuation would depend upon the peculiarities of the person who was entrusted with the valuation. Therefore, it was very necessary that they should introduce into this Bill some words or clauses which would lay down precisely and definitely what were the main lines upon which real and personal property were to be valued. He knew of one estate which was nominally valued at £30,000 a year. It was an Irish estate. The actual receipts from that estate did not exceed something like £5,000 a year. They might fairly argue that a rent roll of £30,000 a year, if valued at 25 years, would amount to £750,000. Under the scale that estate would have to pay—if it was valued on that basis, 7½ per cent. duty; that was to say, £56,000, or 11 years of the net income that the proprietor would enjoy—half the freehold value. Surely these were matters in respect of which they must have some information from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was not suggesting that the Chancellor of the Exchequer intended to put any fictitious value upon these estates, but he thought it was only fair that they should know exactly and precisely the line of valuation that would be taken. The Ailesbury estate had been referred to, and that was a fair case to be considered, and showed that unless there was some precise rule decided upon the greatest injustice would be done. He looked out the other day an interesting case of an estate which had been lately bought up, and which was the property of a nobleman who died lately, who was not only a landed proprietor but was interested largely in the brewing trade. He found that under the old Probate Duty that estate would pay £19,500, and in respect of Estate Duty £6,500. Under this Bill it would have to pay £48,780—that was to say, £22,000 more. He was not complaining of the incidence of the tax in respect of this particular estate, because he agreed that it was fair and reasonable that in such an instance a larger sum should be taken; but what he was pressing was that in this Estate Duty there ought to be some distinct and definite rule laid down so that people might know how this tax would really be levied. There could be no question that this duty would be very largely evaded. Perhaps that was not a proper word to use. It seemed to him that one of the effects of this Bill would be that it would tend to induce people to part with their personalty before they died, and even real estate also. He personally did not see any objection to that; he did not see there was any fraud involved, but they would find out that owing to the evasions it would not be possible to obtain any large revenue out of the tax. With regard to the assimilation of real and personal property, it might be that some Members on his own side of the House would not agree with him when he said he looked upon that arrangement as a satisfactory one. He believed in making the taxation of real and personal property entirely alike, and he said that almost entirely in the interest of real property. There was an opinion abroad that real property did not pay its share of taxation. That was altogether a mistake. There was a lecturer travelling in the north of London who was saying that the whole taxation of the country ought to be laid on the land. Of course, he must be a person who knew nothing at all about the incidence of taxation. He did not even know that the whole gross rental of the land of the country would only just half pay the amount necessary to be raised by taxation. But such was the ignorance of some persons in regard to the taxation of the land that they honestly thought that land escaped a great deal of its legitimate burden, whereas hon. Members of that House knew that land was in fact so overburdened that it was not possible for it to bear much more taxation. By the Parish Councils Bill there had been added a 6d. rate to the land, and although it did not sound much it meant a great deal with the land in its present depressed state. This Bill would show many people that the land was taxed up to a higher point than they supposed. Someone had stated that this new tax would only mean an increase of £300,000 a year on land, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself put it at something like £400,000 a year. Therefore, they had got brought out the fact that really and truly, although this enormous increase of taxation was to be put on all property, the great increase would be in respect of personalty, and that only between £300,000 and £400,000 extra was to be got out of the land through assimilating the duties. There was another point to which he wished to call attention, and that was the indirect and partial acknowledgment of the idea that capital should pay a larger amount than industrial incomes. He had himself urged very often that there should be a different scale of Income Tax between industrial and spontaneous income. The Bill touched this point, but it did it in the worst possible way, because under it a man's industrial income would be heavily taxed on his death, although all his life through he had had to bear the burden of taxation and bring up his children and provide for their education. That, he thought, was the worst possible way in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could make a difference between spontaneous and industrial incomes. If they told a man that they were going to burden his estate tremendously on his death the tendency of that man might be to spend as much as he could and not to be careful and thrifty as they would like him to be. It was no consolation to such a man to know that persons who were very rich would also be heavily taxed upon death. When the Bill was in Committee he should raise this question, because he was sure that the Income Tax could not be fairly raised unless there was an equitable difference made between industrial and spontaneous income. What he thought was a fatal blot upon the Bill was the proposal for the suspension of the Sinking Fund. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether he (Mr. Bartley) had not always objected to any reduction in the Sinking Fund. In 1887, when the Sinking Fund stood at £28,000,000, and when the Government unfortunately reduced it, he objected, and he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with all his financial virtues, would have maintained the position he took up then, that the Sinking Fund should not be decreased. He certainly thought the right hon. Gentleman was in earnest when he said that he should not think of touching the Sinking Fund. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman would say that the circumstances were entirely different at the present time, but the fact was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had fallen at the first temptation, like so many other Chancellors had fallen, and suspended a part of the Sinking Fund which, according to his speeches, he would never touch. The right hon. Gentleman had reduced the Sinking Fund in two ways. He had suspended one large item of £1,000,000 odd, and had taken £288,000 from the Naval Defence Fund. This was a very paltry proceeding. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not make his Budget meet except by taking £300,000 from the Treasury Chest. Now he was obliged to go to the Naval Defence Fund—the Fund which was created under the Act that the right hon. Gentleman had so often derided—in order to make his Budget meet. He must say he sympathised with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It must be very galling to him that at a time when he was culminating his career by bringing in a great Budget he could only make his finances balance with the aid of the funds which had been raised under the National Defence Act. But as a humble follower of the finance of the right hon. Gentleman he would let that pass; but he must say that he took a serious view of the fact that, although they were going to pay an 8d. Income Tax, increase the Property Tax and the tax on beer and spirits, yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given up his views about the Sinking Fund, and taken from it moneys to pay the expenditure of the year. He knew perfectly well that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not condescend to pay attention to anything that he might say, but, all the same, he had always looked up to him with respect as the great champion of the protection of the Sinking Fund, and now he found that the right hon. Gentleman was no better than anybody else, and that so soon as he discovered himself in difficulties had resort to this Fund in order to make a nominal surplus. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the Budget ought not to be made a Party question. The right hon. Gentleman discounted the merit of that statement when he dwelt so fully and freely on the fact that the extra taxation that he was proposing would only fall upon one particular class of the community. He thought it was a dangerous sign when a Chancellor of the Exchequer began to explain that his taxation would only touch one class. It laid the whole Budget open to suspicion. When, again, in answer to one of the Irish Representatives, he said that the incidence of the new taxation would fall with hardly any weight upon Ireland, he thought it took away even more from the force of his argument that a Budget ought not to be treated as a Party measure. He acknowledged that in regard to many of the principles of this measure he was in agreement with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The real fact of the case was this, however: that the Bill was in reality a matter of detail, and he had been trying to show that the details were not set out. The great difficulties of the valuation of estates, realty and personalty, were not considered, and therefore it was necessary for them to make a careful investigation of this Bill when it was in Committee. Although they might agree with some of the principles of the Bill, they must see that the details of it inflicted no hardship upon any of the classes affected, and, above all things, that the method of valuation which was to be adopted should not have practically the effect of stamping the agriculturists out of existence. He did not object either to the selling of estates or the dividing up of estates. This Bill did not allow either one or the other to be done. It was not possible to borrow money in order to pay taxes. All these defects showed, he thought, that the scheme had been brought out with a view to the making of a popular Budget for a certain section of the community. It was merely a vote-catching Budget, making an attractive appearance, but framed without regard to strict equity. They did not oppose every principle of it, but it would be their duty, if it passed its Second Readinff and got into Committee, to do their utmost to introduce details that would safeguard all the various interests involved. Because the measure was lacking in most important details he should support the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

*MR. JOHNSON-FERGUSON (Leicester, Loughborough) said, they had heard a great deal about the difficulties in which owners of encumbered estates might be placed by the passing of this Bill. That, however, had nothing to do with them. What they had to be decided was whether it was right and just that landed property on the death of the owner should pay the same contribution to the State according to its value as was paid by other forms of property in the country? That was the question which, so far as the first part of the Bill was concerned, the House had to decide, and so far as he was concerned his answer would be an emphatic "Yes" to the Government. He believed that to give to any particular form of property even the appearance of enjoying a privilege not possessed by other forms was to expose it to very grave danger. It raised up a feeling that other kinds of property were being treated unjustly. He, therefore, welcomed the action of the Government in trying, as far as the Death Duties were concerned, to put landed property on precisely the same footing as personal property. He did not deny that the Bill would place the owners of many landed estates mortgaged up to two-thirds of their value in a difficult position. Take an estate valued at £100,000, and assume that it was mortgaged to two-thirds its value, or £66,000, leaving a free value of some £34,000. The net income of that estate would probably be £3,000 a year, out of which as interest of mortgage £2,300 a year would have to be paid, leaving a free income of only £700 a year. The duty payable on the £34,000 would be £1,530; or, allowing for interest, £200 a year spread over eight years, and the free income would be reduced to £500 a year. This might mean that the owner of the estate would have to leave his family house and go elsewhere; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not responsible for this. It was the man who in the first instance left his heir in the position of being nominal owner of an estate worth £100,000, with the social position and responsibilities of ownership, yet with mortgages such as to leave only a free income of £700 a year. They were told that it was a great evil that the State should encourage further burdening by means of mortgage of the landed property of the country. He admitted this, and thought many of the difficulties in our rural districts were due to so many estates being burdened with mortgages. But this Bill would not have that effect. Take the case he had spoken of. Suppose the estate worth £100,000, free from all burdens, and with an income of £3,000, the Estate Duty on that would be £5,500. The settled estates of this country were usually re-settled every time the next heir became 21 years of age. From the table of one of the large Insurance Companies he found that £5,500 would be insured on the life of a person 21 years of age for a payment of £137 for 20 years, or £99 per annum for life. What would happen would be that when the resettlement was made the life of the next heir would be insured, and the premium on that would be made one of the first charges on the estates, and on his death the money would be used for the payment of Death Duty. The £137 a year would be an additional charge on the estate, but so long as Parliament spent money at the rate it was now spending it, the money would have to be raised in some way. But on an estate managed with reasonable regard to prudence and good management, the demand now made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not one that would place the estate in any real difficulty, or compel the owner to take it into the market. Passing to the Income Tax clauses, he was glad the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognised that there was a material difference between the gross and net income from landed property whether in land or buildings, and to meet that he made an allowance before levying the Income Tax. But that allowance by no means represented the difference between the gross and net income of land, and now that landed property (land and buildings) were put on precisely the same footing so far as the Death Duties were concerned with other forms of property, they were bound in justice to place landed property as far as Income Tax was concerned also on precisely the same footing as other forms of property. Look at the way in which Income Tax was levied on personal property. If it was on mortgage or invested in Government Stock you paid on the net sum received; if it was invested in business the expense attendant on carrying on the business, including insurance and the cost of maintaining and repairing all machinery employed, and all bad and doubtful debts, were deducted before the net profits were arrived at; and, in addition to this, you were entitled to deduct a certain percentage, varying in different parts of the country from 5 to 7½ per cent., for depreciation of machinery employed. Compare this with the way Income Tax was levied on land. It was levied on the gross annual value, which might be either the rental or something more, but the offer of 10 per cent. on land, and 16 per cent. on buildings, did not meet the necessities of the case. Two cases would illustrate the difference with which Income Tax pressed on the two forms of property. The great storm in January, 1882, which swept away the Tay Bridge, did so much damage to an estate near where he lived that it took the entire gross half-year's rental of the estate to repair the damage, and the owner of the property did not receive one penny of income for that half-year; but not one penny reduction did he receive from the Income Tax authorities owing to the loss. The same storm did considerable damage to a large manufacturing concern with which he was well acquainted, blowing down walls and destroying machinery. The cost of repairs was paid out of the current year's revenue, and naturally reduced the profits; but it was put against them, and the manufacturer was called upon to pay Income Tax on the average of four years, including the disastrous year. When once real and personal property were put on the same footing as regarded the Death Duties these anomalies should be removed. Look how Income Tax was levied on buildings in large towns. The higher portions of large buildings were usually served with elevators, which were erected at considerable expense by the proprietors, who let out the building either for residential or business purposes. In one of our northern towns was a block let out in chambers, from which a rental of £4,000 a year was derived. The cost of working the elevator was £250 a year exclusive of any allowance for wear and tear or depreciation. On an average valuation the rent, without the hoist, would be £3,500 a year, yet Income Tax was levied every year on the full £4,000 without any allowance whatever for the expense incurred in working the elevator which was an absolutely essential expense for the £4,000 to be earned. A large proportion of the difference between the gross and net income of landed property was essentially expenditure without which land quickly went out of cultivation, and was just as much a portion of the cost of producing the crops raised as was the expense of repairing and maintaining the machinery of a cotton or woollen mill part of the cost of producing the yarn or cloth made in those mills. In February, 1890, a Committee was appointed by the House to inquire into the expense of management of the woods and forests and land revenue of the Crown, and to see whether the expenditure on the Crown estates was in excess of what would be made by private landowners upon similar properties. Sir W. Kingscote was examined on that occasion, and stated that he had, at the request of the Committee, drawn up a detailed Schedule of the expense incurred on the agricultural estates of the Crown, and compared it with a similar return from eleven other estates in different parts of the country, and the result had been to show that the expenditure on private estates was in excess of that on Crown estates. Sir W. Kingscote had been in communication with several noblemen and gentlemen on this subject, and many of them had been good enough to allow him to examine their estate books and to extract from them such figures as he thought necessary for the purpose of comparison with the expenditure on Crown estates. He would not, however, weary the House with many figures, but would simply call the attention of hon. Members to a summary handed in to the Select Committee. According to the summary the expenditure on Crown estates was :—Management, 4·5 per cent.; repairs, 12·6; general expense, 7·0—total 24·1. The expenditure on 10 out of the 11 private estates averaged:—Management, 4·2 per cent.; repairs, 20·1; sundries, 5·7—total 30·0. Now, had that been an unreasonable expenditure they might naturally have expected to see some criticism upon that in the Report of the Committee, but that body seemed to have come to the conclusion that, even taking a moderate scale of expenditure, 20 per cent. was the very smallest margin between gross and net income, eliminating every consideration with regard to residence and outlay connected therewith. It was said that the deduction could not be settled in individual cases, but that a uniform course must be pursued in all cases; but he could not see any reason why deductions in the case of landed property should not be made variable and dependent upon the circumstances of each just as they were in all other classes of property, and just as every case was settled by itself under Schedule (D). In Scotland an allowance was made to a landowner depending on the amount of rates he paid. Why should not landowners in England be placed in a similar position as regarded their outgoings? Landowning was a business, and in this matter it ought to be treated as other businesses were. He believed that the best way of meeting the difficulty was by extending the provision to which the hon. Member for the West Derby Division had alluded—by extending to occupiers of land the right to be assessed under Schedule (D) if they thought fit, and, providing that they kept proper books, to be allowed to go before the Commissioners to be re-assessed on their actual income. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would carefully consider this proposal, as there was a very strong feeling existing on the question.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University) said, that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had in the latter part of his speech given a very good answer to the first part of it, and a sufficient reason why he should support the Amendment. It was clear that real property paid far more to the rates than personal property, and if taxation was to be equalised it ought to be equalised all round. Practically, it was almost impossible to raise rates upon personal property, and the only way that had yet been suggested of equalising the burdens upon the two classes of property was by putting the rates chiefly upon realty and the Death Duties—chiefly upon personalty. The Government now proposed to alter the system in one respect without altering it in another, which was obviously a great injustice. It was surprising that the Government, who professed so much anxiety to pass the Newcastle Programme, should have selected this year for the introduction of a Budget which raised so many questions of intricacy and perplexity. In 1874, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) proposed to the country to do away with the Income Tax, it was generally understood that he intended to meet the additional taxation which would be required by an increase of the Death Duties. For that course there was a great deal to be said, but Her Majesty's present Government, without reducing the Income Tax, and even when they were increasing it, were adding to the Death Duties, which fell practically upon the same class of the community.

So far, therefore, from carrying out the policy of the Member for Midlothian, the Government were taking the opposite course. Not only were they proposing to increase the Death Duties, but they were taking the very important step of introducing a graduated system of taxation. Fortunately, most of them could discuss that question entirely as an abstract problem on its own merits, because it did not affect them personally. It affected their children, no doubt, and they were entitled to speak for them; no one could complain of that. But so far as personal interest was concerned, it would tend the other way, because, unless the increase were thrown on the Death Duties, they would have to pay it, while by throwing it on the Death Duties they made their successors bear the burden. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) did not defend the justice of his proposals. He simply said, to his great astonishment—

> "This raises in its simplest form the vital question of graduated taxation. To my mind the principle, if applied with fairness and justice, is a most equitable and politic principle."

And he added that it had the assent of

> "every writer on political economy and finance."

Now, he (Sir J. Lubbock) ventured to say that this was not only not correct, but that the very reverse was the case. The right hon. Gentleman quoted Adam Smith, and no doubt it was true that Adam Smith in his first axiom stated that—

> "The subjects of every State ought to contribute towards the support of the Government as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities."

But then he went on to say—

> "That is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State. The expense of government to the individuals of a great nation is like the expense of management to the joint tenants of a great estate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their respective interests in the estate. In the observation or neglect of this maxim consists what is called the equality or inequality of taxation."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer observed that the effect of the graduated Succession Duty was equivalent to a graduated Income Tax. Another advanced Radical but sound thinker, Professor Fawcett, in his excellent *Manual of Political Economy*, said—

> "The proposal to make the rate of the Income Tax progressively increase with the amount of the income would almost indefinitely strengthen the objection that the tax operates as a discouragement to prudence. It will be sanctioning the principle that the proportion which the State should take from a man's income should increase in the direct ratio of the amount he might save."

The tax as proposed by the Government was avowedly a tax on capital, and Professor Fawcett went on to point out that—

> "It consequently follows that if any portion of the Income Tax is paid out of capital which would otherwise be employed within the country itself, the incidence of the tax partly falls on the labourer, although the tax may never be directly levied from them."

And he then proceeded to show how this would be the effect—

> "It is," he continued, "important to remember that the proposal to graduate the Income Tax seems to sanction the principle that it is desirable to impose a penalty upon the accumulation of wealth. Any such scheme which is aimed against large capitals probably obtains popular support, because it seems to favour the prejudice which is frequently expressed against capital. The spread of education is, however, gradually dissipating this error."

And he concluded—

> "It therefore follows that one of the most serious objections which can be urged against the tax is greatly strengthened if it should be so graduated that the tax is increased in proportion to the amount which an individual saves."

Dr. Farr, the late Registrar General, in his evidence before the Income Tax Committee of 1852, said—

> "The correct principle with regard to taxation is that each member of the community should contribute every year to the common yearly expenditure of the country in a fixed proportion to the amount of property in his possession."

John Stuart Mill, in his *Political Economy*, laid down that—

> "To tax the higher incomes at a higher percentage than the smaller is to lay a tax on industry and economy; to impose a penalty on people for having worked harder and saved more than their neighbours. It is partial taxation, which is a mild form of robbery. A just and wise legislation would scrupulously abstain from opposing obstacles to the acquisition of even the largest fortune by honest exertion."

He would only quote one foreign economist, for, in fact, such a suggestion as that made by Government had generally been regarded as so unjust as to be hardly worthy of serious discussion. The late Prime Minister of France, M.

Thiers, however, alluded to it, and laid it down as a self-evident axiom that every member of a State should contribute to the Revenue of the country in proportion to what he earned or to what he possessed. He went on to discuss graduated taxation, and pointed out the objections and difficulties. He said—

> "If you once begin you have no logical limit. You are on an inclined plane, and once started cannot stop yourself."

Having shown that the principle was unwise, he concluded by giving his opinion that it was *un vrai pillage*. In proportional taxation, he said, you had a principle; graduated taxation was an odious injustice, a "revolting exercise of arbitrary power" John Stuart Mill, in his *Political Economy*, quoted Adam Smith's four rules, the first of which, as he had shown, condemned graduated taxation, and summed up by saying that these rules

> "having been generally concurred in by subsequent writers may be said to have become classical."

So far, then, from supporting the proposals of Government the authority of political economists was altogether against them. It was true that in Mill's opinion the objections which were conclusive against a graduated Income Tax did not apply to a graduated Succession Duty; but this would hardly help the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because, as he had told the House, a graduated Succession Duty would, in his opinion, be practically a graduated Income Tax. If this principle were once admitted, when were they to stop? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square (Mr. Goschen), admitted, and indeed proclaimed, these principles when he established the Estate Duty. It was, in fact, he said, the first rung of the ladder, and the Government proposed to ascend the scale. But ladders have several rungs; they had only got to the second. Where would the rest lead them? The object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to tax the rich as much as possible in order to spare the poor; but did he effect that object? It had been well pointed out that any proposal which impaired the solvency of the Insurance Offices would be a great national misfortune. And not only would the security on which so much of our social life was based be injured, but the many poor people who were the shareholders in the Insurance Offices would be injured, too. A large proportion of the shares were held in small quantities by women, widows, executors, and trustees for children, and they were the people who would be injured. But how were those affected who were immediately concerned in the Succession Duties? Let the House consider a concrete case. Suppose that two men each received £50,000. One was an only child, and inherited his father's property. He would pay 5 per cent. The other was one of ten children who inherited equally. He was no richer than the other, and yet he would have to pay 7½ per cent. because he was one of a group of persons interested in a common property. The Government might as well make Bank of England stock pay a higher rate than shares in a smaller bank. They might as well make a Yorkshireman pay more than a man in Rutland because Yorkshire was a bigger and richer county. The two men inherited exactly the same, they were equally rich, and yet one paid half as much again as the other, because his legacy, instead of being a fund in itself, was a part of a larger one. Surely if graduation were to be adopted it should be graduation on legacy and not on the estate. The Government proposal might be described as something else, but it certainly was not graduation. He did not feel confident that the result would answer the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman, because in the past, when attempts had been made to introduce inequitable systems of taxation, the great legal ingenuity of the country had devised means to defeat those attempts; but even if the addition to the national Revenue were as large as the right hon. Gentleman anticipated, it would be dearly purchased by a course which, so far from being approved by the highest economical authorities, had been forcibly described by one of the most eminent as "a revolting exercise of arbitrary power." Before sitting down, he was anxious to say something about the treatment of London in reference to the Exchequer grants, and here he believed that he spoke for the whole of the London Members. But though he could not speak for other cities and districts, it was by no means a question which affected London only.

The grants from Imperial taxation were made on a dual system, partly the amount of licences actually collected within the area, and partly a proportion of the Probate, Custom, and Excise duties. There was also a special grant for police pensions. The Bill proposed to continue the arrangement under which the Exchequer contributions were apportioned according to the amount paid by Government in the year 1887-88 in respect of certain grants discontinued in that year by the Local Government Act, and this system was open to serious objections. In the first place, the year 1887-88 was very unfortunate for London, inasmuch as London received less than 22 per cent., whereas for several previous years it had received over 23 per cent. But, in the second place, these grants themselves were not based on any equitable system of division as between county and county; in some of them, as for instance those for roads and for medical officers, London had scarcely any allotment. As regarded the grant for main roads, out of a total of £500,000, London received £3,500 only; and the fact that the City supported its own police was left out of account altogether. The consequence was that in this respect alone London received over £150,000 less than its fair amount. Indeed, the relief afforded to London was far less than that to any other part of the country. Had relief been distributed according to rateable value, London would have received in the year 1887-88 about £160,000 more than she did receive, and had it been distributed so as to equally relieve the actual burden of rates, London would have been entitled to £490,000 more than she received. Then again, while London received in grants less than her fair share, she contributed to the Exchequer an unduly large proportion in the shape of taxes. This inequality appeared clearly in connection with the Inhabited House Duty, which was essentially a local tax, of which London paid £655,874 out of a total of £1,460,180, or 45 per cent. of the whole. From rates on Government property London received £40,000 a year less than she ought, and in the arrangements as regards the police also a very large sum. The result was that, while London contributed 24 per cent. and received back only 17 per cent., the rest of the country paid 76 per cent. and received back no less than 83 per cent. He believed they would be able to establish a just claim on behalf of London for £300,000 or even £400,000 a year out of the Government contributions more than they now received. The question was one of great importance to London, where the rates were very heavy, and steadily increasing. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not see his way to do anything at once in this respect, he might at least assent to the appointment of a Committee, a Motion for which, on behalf of his colleagues, he had given notice of. He did not wish, and did not think that his colleagues would wish, to bring any charge against the Government of intentionally arranging the matter unfairly. At the time the arrangement was made it was believed to be generally equitable; but the experience of the last five years had shown that London and other large cities were placed at a very great disadvantage. He hoped, therefore, the Government would take the matter into their consideration and give London the relief to which it was fairly entitled.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The Debate this evening was opened by the hon. and learned Member for Thirsk in a speech of considerable ability, which covered a large amount of ground. The hon. and learned Member, however, appeared to have somewhat shifted his ground since he last spoke on the subject, because when he spoke a few days ago he based his attack upon the Bill on the ground that it would throw great additional burdens upon agricultural land, whereas now he has extended his objection to the ground that it is unfair to house property also. The hon. and learned Gentleman, however, appears to forget that most house property—in the South of England, at all events—being leasehold and, therefore, personal property, is already subject to Probate Duty. For my part, I consider that this difference between leasehold house property and freehold house property forms one of the strongest arguments in favour of the equalisation of the Death Duties. I recollect that when some years ago one of the greatest London landowners died and left his freehold houses to three ladies of advanced age they only paid some £7,000 or £8,000 on succeeding instead of the £140,000 they would have had to pay had the property been leasehold instead of freehold. One of the main objects of the Bill is to bring freehold land and house property under the same law as leasehold property is under. The hon. and learned Member then went on to attack the Bill, and to claim exemption in respect of what took place in 1863, and he quoted in support of his argument the language which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian used then. But the hon. and learned Member appeared not to be aware of the speech delivered by that right hon. Gentleman in 1891 in answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, who was at the head of the Agricultural Department. The right hon. Member for Sleaford said—

"The hon. Member (Mr. Provand) left out of account altogether the burden of rates, for he roundly declared that rates fell upon the occupier alone, and were in no way paid by the land. The occupier pays a certain sum for the use of the land, and in that sum are included rates as well as taxes. The effect on the owner is that if the rates are high he gets less rent, and if they are low he gets more rent; and I maintain that it would not be difficult to show that ultimately the whole burden of the rates falls on the owner of the land, and on nobody else."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian said—

"Those were the circumstances in which I endeavoured to show that the land under Schedule (A) pays more than 7d. in the £1, and that the burden is greater than it is commonly supposed to be. My right hon. Friend (Sir W. Harcourt) reminds me that it might be urged that that has been redressed by the Constitution. If we are to speak of that, I would say that, in my opinion, it has been a great deal more than redressed by the contribution in 1888 from the Treasury. . . . . The fact is this, that—I am not now speaking of rural land alone —while realty has received an enormous boon at the expense of the Consolidated Fund, a boon of which the whole, in the case of rural land, goes to the landlord, and of which a large part, if not the whole, in the case of land not rural goes to the landlord—while that boon has been given to the landlords of the country, rural and urban, at the charge of the Consolidated Fund, a compensation has been administered to the Consolidated Fund in return which is, I believe I am right in saying, an affair of a few hundreds of thousands of pounds. In these circumstances, what is the position of the Government? Are we permitted to hope that the Government will do something more to redress the balance, something which will bring the change in the Succession Duties to a point, if not equal, yet, at all events, more nearly approaching to the enormous boon that the owners of property have received? No, Sir; the Chancellor of the Exchequer long ago told us that he had nothing more to offer, that he could hold out no further expectation; and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture has to-night not only given emphasis to that doctrine, but has told us, and told us on behalf of the Government, that it is the rural landlords who have a grievance, that they already pay too much, that they, if they chose, might make out a case for relief from the House of Commons, and come before Parliament as a claimant. . . . . This I know, that the question between the rates and the Consolidated Fund is not a settled question, that no proper equivalent, no fair and proper consideration, has been given to the Consolidated Fund by a re-adjustment of taxation in respect of that enormous boon which has been handed over to the rates, and that a further and larger change than has yet been made in the Death Duties is, in my opinion, a matter of absolutely necessity on the plainest ground of justice before Parliament will have fully vindicated its character as the just distributor of benefit and burden among the several classes of the community."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian considered that what occurred in 1888, and the subventions given by the Treasury in aid of the local rates, completely altered the position, and constituted the strongest claim on the part of the State to a further adjustment of the Death Duties. Then the hon. and learned Member for Thirsk went on to point out the hardships which the younger children might incur who would have to pay the Succession Duty in respect of legacies charged upon real estate by their parents. Well, I confess I do not see that hardship with regard to younger children. The hon. and learned Member was followed by the hon. Member for Wimbledon, who appeared to think that the agricultural community are deeply interested in avoiding the increased duty upon beer. He presented this extraordinary case. He appeared to admit that at first it would not be possible for the brewers to put an increased price upon the consumer, but said that after the first six months he thought they would seek to shift the burden from their own to other shoulders by buying inferior foreign grain, and no longer buying in the best English markets.

*Mr. BONSOR said, he quoted from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, in his estimate, only calculated upon extracting from the brewers a sum of £580,000, out of a possible £840,000, in respect of the additional duty. He pointed out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the balance of £260,000 would fall upon somebody, and that somebody he suggested would be the agricultural interest.

Sir W. HARCOURT: That is a mistake. The £260,000 is the amount less than will be collected this year. As in the case of every tax, we do not get the whole of it in the first year.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I think I was not wrong in saying that the argument was that the agricultural community would be injured by the brewers buying inferior foreign grain. That seemed to imply that the brewers, in order to save themselves from the burden of the additional duty, would supply inferior grain, instead of the best English barley, and would, by inference, supply their customers with inferior beer.

Mr. BONSOR: I said the brewers would use raw grain instead of malt from barley.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Yes, instead of buying the best English barley they would buy something inferior, and shift the burden upon somebody else. The hon. Member proceeded to point out that the price of barley has fallen in the last few years from 45s. to 28s. and 27s., or 40 per cent., the brewers using very much more sugar than formerly. The hon. Member will, no doubt, admit that the price of sugar has also fallen considerably of late years, almost in the same proportion as formerly, and yet the hon. Member went on to say that the price of beer to the consumer had only been reduced 10 per cent. or 15 per cent., and argued that the brewers had made no profits.

*Mr. BONSOR: No. I argued that £2,000,000 a year of the difference between the price of the material and the price of the product of the brewers had gone to the Exchequer in consequence of the alteration of the Malt Tax into a Beer Tax.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I think the decrease in the price of barley and sugar has occurred within the last 12 or 15 years, whereas the alteration in the incidence of the tax is very much older than that.

Mr. BONSOR: No, Sir. I quoted the price of 34s. 10d. for the year after the introduction of the Malt Tax, and it has now fallen to 28s. 10d.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Then the hon. Member admits that the price of barley has fallen considerably since 1876, and he went on to say that the price of beer has been lowered only 10 per cent., and yet he argued that the brewers have made very small profits. The hon. Member only quoted the Brewers' Companies. He stated that he had examined the Returns of several of the Brewers' Companies, and ascertained that their average profits did not amount to more than 6 per cent.; but the hon. Member did not state what his own profits were.

*Mr. BONSOR: I am one of a Brewing Company, and my own profits do not amount to 6 per cent. on the whole capital employed.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I did not think the hon. Member's Company was open to all the world, but supposed it was a private Company.

*Mr. BONSOR: No, Sir; it is a Company whose shares are quoted on the Stock Exchange.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I thought the hon. Gentleman was a member of a private firm of brewers.

Mr. BONSOR: No, Sir.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Then I find it somewhat difficult to understand how, in view of the prices quoted by the hon. Member, and the small reduction in the price of beer to the consumer, the Brewery Companies have not made larger profits. Of this I am certain—that many of them have made very great profits within the last few years. [*Cries of* "Quote!"] It is a well-known fact that breweries have made very large profits. [An hon. Member: Quote one case.] I will undertake to say that such is the general belief. Whether some Companies have been less fortunate than others I will not say. With regard to a question put by the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool, I have to point out that the Estate Duty is levied on the death of the owner, and before the *corpus* is distributed, and it matters not whether there are one or 10 children —the question of justice or injustice does not arise. Then the hon. Member quoted from a tenant farmer in his district in

Wiltshire, to the effect that the incidence of local rates fell upon the tenant farmer and not upon the landlord, and he claimed that any reduction of the local rates would be enjoyed by the tenant farmer and not by the owner of the land. The hon. Member upon that point was in opposition to the right hon. Member for Sleaford.

Mr. W. LONG said, his argument was not in the slightest degree in contravention of his right hon. Friend's. He had quoted from a farmer who stated that no relief had been felt either by the owner or occupier, because agriculture had been so depressed that there had been no possibility of relief.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I will answer that argument by showing that there has been great benefit derived by tenant-farmers and owners of land in respect of the remission of rates due to the subventions made by the right hon. Gentleman. That has been well shown by my right hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, who has, indeed, somewhat understated the case. My right hon. Friend quoted the average results on agricultural land throughout the country; but in order to estimate the real effect of the subventions given out of the Treasury from 1888 it is necessary to look into the details of the several Unions, and to compare the amount of the rates before the subventions with what they are now, taking into account the reduction in the valuations in respect of agricultural depression and the reduction of rents. I have obtained a series of tables, showing what has been the effect in different Unions of the subventions given by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the House hears what they are hon. Members will be somewhat surprised at the amount of benefit derived from these subventions. Take, in the first place, the Union of Marlborough in Wiltshire. I find in that case the valuation of land was reduced from £52,000 in 1878 to the very small amount of £30,000 in 1892, this very great reduction of valuation in the interval being due to the great depression in agriculture which we all admit and deplore. The reduction in valuation was no less than 40 per cent.; and yet, notwithstanding that the rates of all kinds levied in the Union were reduced from £5,800 in 1878 to £2,770, the average of the last two years, and the rates in the £1 had been reduced from 2s. 3d. to 1s. 9d., representing a reduction of 6d. in the £1 in spite of the very great reduction in the value of the land, I make out the calculation that a farmer who rented a farm of £400 a year in 1878 would have paid from the then valuation and at the then rate £45 a year; whereas in 1892, with the reduced valuation and with the reduced rate, he would pay only £17 10s., a difference, therefore, of more than £28. I daresay it may be said that the actual rates levied do not represent all the burdens upon the landowners, and that especially there is the contribution to schools, because in this Union there is no School Board. I have worked out what have been the contributions of the landowners in respect of the schools from the Return before the House, and I find that the aggregate contributions in the Union amount to 1¾d. in the £1, which is not a very serious amount on which to form any very strong argument. Let me take the case of the Union of Amesbury, also in Wilts. The valuation fell from £65,000 in 1878 to £39,000 in 1892, a very large and serious reduction due to the very great reductions of rent in that Union—a fall of 40 per cent. The total rates of all kinds levied in that Union have fallen from £5,600 to £3,600. The rates in 1878 were 1s. 8d. in the £1; in 1881, 2s., and they are now 1s. 10d.

Mr. W. LONG: The right hon. Gentleman is now only quoting the Union rates?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The Union rates.

Mr. W. LONG: It is rather important to remember that certain matters have been transferred from the Unions to the counties, and a mere statement of the Union rates does not represent the Union rates and the county rates.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I am putting all the rates—every rate which has been levied in the Union.

Mr. W. LONG: I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman does he, and does the Secretary of State for India desire the House to understand that the total rates for all purposes of local taxation levied in the Unions of Marlborough and Amesbury amount in the one case to

1s. 9d., and in the other to 1s. 10d. in the £1?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The information supplied to me is that the amounts I have given include rates of all kinds.

Mr. W. LONG said, this was a matter which was important, and which ought to be cleared up. The right hon. Gentleman who was responsible for the Local Government Board told the House on behalf of the Government that the total rates levied in the Unions of Marlborough and Amesbury were 1s. 9d. and 1s. 10d. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India must be aware of the fact that under the Act of 1888 there was a transfer from the Unions and Highway Authorities to the County Councils of certain payments, and by that amount the rate of the County Council was naturally increased, and what had been in the one case the highway rate, and in the other the poor rate, became for the purposes of local government the county rate. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the total rates were 1s. 9d. and 1s. 10d., and what he wanted to know was whether that included the total rates of the district, or whether it was not, as he had reason to believe it was, a statement of the Union rate totally, exclusive of rates under several other heads.

*Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: My information is, that it does include every rate of every kind levied in the Union. I have been anxious to ascertain what was the total amount of all the rates levied in the Union, and that is the information with which I have been supplied. Let me take another case—that of the Union of Sleaford. I have asked for information about the Union merely as a test case, and I find this state of things there. In the Sleaford Union the poor rate valuation has been reduced from £213,000 to £180,000, a reduction of £33,000, and the total rates levied of all kinds—including poor, county and other precept rates—which amounted in 1877 and 1878 to £26,000, in the year 1891-2 amounted to £18,500, a very large reduction, and the rate in the £1 has gone down from 2s. 6·7d. to an average of just about 2s. That is an enormous reduction, in spite of the reduction in valuation due to the great fall in rents in that district, which in the case of agricultural property had amounted to 40 and 50 per cent. I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chaplin) will admit that the reductions of rents in his immediate district have been 50 per cent. Of course, the average may not be so high, and as against that there has been a probable increase of the valuation of house property and railways assessed to the rates, but the figures I have quoted tend to show that but for the great reduction of rent and the enormous fall in the valuation, the reduction of rates would have been very large indeed. But even with that reduced valuation there has been a reduction of from 2s. 6d. to 2s. in the £1. I will take one other case—namely, the parish of Hatfield, because I observed the other day, in a speech made by the late Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury stated that the landowners had to pay one-sixth or one-seventh of their total net income in the shape of rates. What is the state of the case in Hatfield? I find that the valuation in 1878-9 was £56,000; and in 1891-2 it was £60,000; therefore the valuation is very much the same. I have no doubt that the rent in the Union has somewhat lowered, but probably on account of the rise in the valuation of other property the average valuation of the whole Union has remained about the same. I find that in the same time the actual rates levied of all kinds have been reduced from £4,600 to £3,900, and the rates in the £1 from 2s. 2d. to 1s. 11d., a reduction of 3d., and this means, not one-sixth or one-seventh of the income of the landowners, but about one-eleventh. I should like to take one other case as an illustration of the result of the subvention made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in a Union where there has not been, so far as I know, any reduction of rent. I have taken a rural Union in Lancashire, Garstang, and I think the right hon. Member for Sleaford will admit that in the County of Lancashire the farmers have not felt the agricultural distress to anything like the same degree that it has been felt in other districts, and practically the rent has not been much reduced. What has been the effect in a Union like that? I find that in 1878-9 the Poor Law valuation was £106,000, and in 1891-2 it had risen to £119,000. The actual rates levied in 1878-9 and the previous year averaged £9,000; in the last two years they averaged £6,800, a very large reduction, whilst the rate in the £1 has been reduced from 1s. 10d. to 1s. 2d. I will quote the Union of Thirsk, represented by the hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Grant Lawson), and what has been the case there? There has been a comparatively small reduction of valuation. I presume that the agricultural rents have been lowered, but, probably on account of the rise in the value of other property, the total valuation has not been reduced in the same proportion. The total valuation has been reduced from £144,000 in 1878 to £130,000 in the years 1891-2, a reduction of £14,000; but the actual rates levied in the district have been reduced from £10,800 to £8,500, a very large reduction; the rate in the £1 has been reduced from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 3d. I think these cases prove my statement—that the effect of the subventions conceded by the late Government has been to largely lower the rates in the agricultural Unions, and that that operation would have been still greater if it had not been for the fact that there had been a large reduction in the valuation of land. I think the facts which I have quoted go even further than the facts quoted by the right hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and show that in purely agricultural Unions the reduction in the amount of rates now levied has been considerable as compared with what they were a few years ago. If we were to go to the years 1868, 1851, or 1852, we should find an even greater reduction of rates. I find in the Union of Hatfield that the rates in 1868 were 3s. in the £1, and now they are only 1s. 11d. In the cases of Sleaford and the other Unions I have quoted I think it will be found there is about the same comparison between the rates of the present day and what they were in 1868. I think I have completely proved the case that the rates of every kind in these agricultural Unions have been very largely reduced. I think the main argument against the Bill before the House is the condition of agriculture. No one who has sat on the Agricultural Commission, as I have done, can doubt the gravity of the condition in many agricultural districts. The accounts we have received from numbers of them are simply deplorable. The farmers are in great difficulties, rents have lowered from 50 to 60 per cent., and even more, land in many districts has been allowed to go back into grass, and many farms are, in some districts, unsaleable. Everybody must deplore this state of things, and hope that better times will soon be experienced. That, of course, is not generally the case throughout the whole country. I have referred to the worst districts in the East of England and part of the centre and South of England where land is heavy clay or where it is poor and unsuitable for growing anything but wheat. There the agricultural depression is severely felt, but further to the West, where there is pasture land, the condition of things is improved, and in some parts of the West of England, though the rents have had to be reduced, and the farmers have not made so much profit as they did formerly, still the farms are lettable at a somewhat reduced rent. The question is whether that condition of things may form any grounds for not proceeding with the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If it be the fact that land has greatly diminished in value it follows, as a matter of course, that its value, for the purposes of Estate Duty under the Bill of my right hon. Friend, will be greatly reduced. If land is unsaleable and there are charges upon it so that the margin is almost nothing, then I presume that the Estate Duty which will be levied under the measure will also be very small. The valuation, I do not think, will be a difficult one, as the hon. Member for the West Derby Division appears to think. The practice of the Excise Department is to take the valuation made by the owner of the property unless they have reason to believe it is altogether of an improper character, and I believe it will turn out in practice that the expenses of the valuation will not be excessive. The question is whether, under these conditions, the measure of my right hon. Friend ought to be proceeded with? I would venture to point out to the House what has been stated by my right hon. Friend before—namely, that the amount of this increase in Estate Duty which will fall on agricultural land will not be large, but by far the greater proportion of it will fall either on house property, ground rents or other real property, or it will be raised by the effect of the graduation of the Probate Duty and Legacy Duty upon personalty. After deducting the amount of the allowance under Schedule (A) in the Income Tax, the total amount which will fall on agricultural land, as has been explained by my right hon. Friend, will be no more than from £350,000 to £400,000. That does not appear to me to be a large amount in proportion to the real annual value of land in the United Kingdom. The annual value of land in the United Kingdom is stated, from the Income Tax, to be not far short of £60,000,000, and £350,000 as the annual burden on that is not a very large amount. I would point out that the question before the House is not an alternative, but whether this scheme or nothing should be carried. Unfortunately we have incurred liabilities for the increase of the Navy amounting to £4,000,000. It is necessary to raise that money by some form of taxation, and the question is in what form it should be raised so as to provide money for the purpose of the services of the State. Is there any other way in which it can be raised in which it will fall more lightly on the agricultural interest? If there were any other alternative which would bring about this result I think I would willingly vote against the Bill, but there is not. I think no person with ordinary ingenuity, who had endeavoured to devise a plan for raising this money, could have formulated one for raising it in any other way. There are only two other alternatives—one by increasing the Income Tax, and the other by increasing the duties on articles of consumption, whether tea or tobacco, or some other articles of general consumption, so as to provide the £4,000,000 required. Let me ask the House what would be the effect of raising the £4,000,000 by increasing the Income Tax? How much of that would fall on the agricultural interest? A 2d. Income Tax would produce something over £4,000,000 of money, and would result in the owners of agricultural land having to produce £500,000. That would be the effect of 2d. in the £1 on so much of the Income Tax assessment as is paid by the owners of agricultural land. Then the farmers would have to pay their share of the Income Tax, which would amount to another £200,000, and the result, therefore, of a 2d. Income Tax would be that the agricultural interest, consisting of landowners and farmers, would have to produce a sum of no less than £700,000 towards the amount required. Let me now consider the effect of the other alternative of raising this £4,000,000 by duties on articles of consumption by the people generally of this country. Supposing we were to raise the money by increasing the Tea and Tobacco Duties, how would it fall? A very large portion of it would fall on one agricultural interest of the country—namely, the agricultural labourers and small farmers. What is the proportion of agricultural labourers and farmers of the United Kingdom to the rest of the community? In England, I believe, the agricultural labourers, tenant farmers, and their families form about one-ninth of the whole population. In Ireland the proportion is 60 and in Scotland 9 per cent. If you add the agricultural population of the three countries together, you will find that they form between one-sixth and one-seventh of the whole population, and, therefore, of these £4,000,000 which would have to be raised by duties of some kind on the articles consumed by the people, you would find one-sixth or one-seventh would have to be paid by the agricultural labourers or farmers. One-sixth of £4,000,000 would be about £700,000, therefore if that alternative were adopted, a very considerable burden would still fall upon the agricultural interest—not upon the same interest as that which it is now proposed to deal with, but in my opinion a not less important interest than that it is now proposed to tax. I venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that the proposal of my right hon. Friend is the most lenient form of taxing the agricultural interest which could possibly be devised. There is, in my opinion, no other method by which the burden would fall more lightly upon the agricultural interest. His proposal would have the effect, taken as a whole, coupled with the reduction in the Income Tax, of throwing on the agricultural interest a sum of between £350,000 and £400,000, and that would fall upon the agricultural class best able to bear it—namely, the landowners. Any other proposal would involve a greater burden upon some one of the agricultural interests of the country, either upon the tenant-farmers or the tenant-farmers and landowners combined, or the tenant-farmers and agricultural labourers combined. I, therefore, think that this scheme will commend itself to the country inasmuch as it imposes as lenient a burden upon the agricultural interest as it is possible to devise. The scheme of my right hon. Friend not only does that, but it treats with very great favour the small farmers and small owners of land of this country, as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk and other speakers. In the first place, the new abatements and remissions in the Income Tax in respect of small incomes will considerably favour the tenant-farmer class; the exemption is raised from £120 to £160, and in other respects the abatements and remissions are favourable to that class. Then there are other provisions extremely favourable to the tenant-farmers. The Estate Duty is more lenient in respect of small owners than the existing Probate Duty. Taking it as a whole, I believe the proposal contained in this Bill will be extremely favourable to the tenant-farmer class, whereas any other possible alternative which can be suggested will throw a greater burden upon them or others connected with the agricultural interest of the country. I venture, therefore, to recommend this measure to the House as one which will carry out the great principle of equalising the Death Duties, an object aimed at for a long time past by every person who has had to consider the financial position of the country, and as also carrying out the principle, to some extent, of a graduation of such duties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London attacked the Bill on the ground of the graduation of the Death Duties. Mr. John Stuart Mill was in favour of graduation, and I venture to say that all the principal economists from the time of Mill have been in favour of this principle. It has been adopted, too, by almost all our colonies. It commends itself to some hon. Members opposite, for the Member for Islington expressed partial approval, and the Member for Thirsk was not averse to entertaining it to some extent, at least in regard to personalty. The great weight of authority is in favour of the principle of graduation. I believe that it is one which is just in principle and will be beneficial in practice, and that it will not in any way tend to injuriously affect the propertied classes. That has been the experience of a great number of our colonies, and I believe its application here would give general satisfaction and produce a considerable income for the State.

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, the explanation of the principles of the Budget given on the part of the Government was of the most meagre character, but it was in keeping with the state of the House. He did not suppose that during the whole time of that discussion there had been 30 Members present supporting the Government, including the Members of the Government themselves. In addition to that, he never recollected a case of a Member of the Cabinet rising at half-past 10, and speaking for a whole hour without receiving a single cheer from any Member in the House. He took note of that fact, because the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had some title to be heard on such a subject. He did not know whether the speech convinced the right hon. Gentleman himself, but he felt bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman did not speak with that force of conviction which they had observed on previous occasions. ["Oh!"] He suggested nothing, except that perhaps the right hon. Gentleman's case was not to his liking; and if that were not so, then the right hon. Gentleman was badly equipped with facts with which to argue his case. The House would recollect that the right hon. Gentleman began his speech by replying to the hon. Member for Thirsk, who had quoted some instances of the most serious character, which would have been shown up at the moment had they been wrong, and which had brought conviction to the House that this measure was likely to produce great inequalities, and placed a much greater burden on small estates than was supposed; but the right hon. Gentleman, when he reached that part of the speech of the hon. Member for Thirsk, he did not attempt to give an answer, but addressed himself to the question as to how the deficit should be made out; and then proceeded to double the deficit. The deficit was originally stated to be £2,000,000. That was the deficit the proposed new taxation was intended to meet. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the deficit was £4,000,000, but he ought to have given the grounds for such a statement. The deficit was really only £2,000,000, and the right hon. Gentleman had no right to frighten the agriculturists by doubling it. But the right hon. Gentleman fell into worse traps as he went forward. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the reductions of rates in Unions as being immense and large. These reductions only amounted to 4½d. in the £1, and that was actually less than the sum —6d. in the £1—which might be imposed under the Parish Council Act of last year. He should like to call attention to the serious absence of statistics which would throw light on the matters dealt with in the discussion. He thought the Opposition had a right to complain that no basis of figures had been given to them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in dealing with the question of Succession Duty, had told them the agricultural interest would only pay an extra sum of between £300,000 and £400,000 a year. He challenged that statement. The House had a right to know the figures on which that statement was based, for he had made inquiries the result of which was to prove that it was totally unfounded. He had the figures of 24 large estates. He found that in the last five years those estates paid in Succession Duty £457,000. Those estates would in future pay, taking probate fairly into calculation, £1,783,000. He admitted that many of those estates were settled, and that in such cases it was right to reckon a life and a half as the general length of a settlement. He knew they must raise the Succession Duty paid in the previous five years in order to make up the figure; but even if they did so, they were left with an increase on those estates alone of £1,280,000, which represented £220,000 a year. The Government's statistics showed they had about 10 of those estates in the last five years. He put it to the House whether, if five agricultural properties paid £220,000 a year extra in the future, and these represented about one-tenth of the whole agricultural properties assessed to Death Duties, it was credible that the remaining nine-tenths were only going to pay £180,000? He believed the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were absolutely and radically wrong. The right hon. Gentleman's statement that the agricultural interest would be very lightly taxed greatly impressed the House, but he believed it to be entirely wrong. But the large estates were not the only estates to be taken into account. He had inquired into the cases of 80 estates of moderate size, some of which were only of 5,000 or 6,000 acres. The actual sums paid by those estates in the past was £19,786; in the future it would be £71,148. If they added to the £19,000 one-half because of the settlement, so that the estates would only pay in one generation and a-half, they still arrived at a figure nearly three times as large as formerly. If these figures were not to be relied on, he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to lay on the Table, before they went into Committee, the estimates by which he had arrived at his own figures. It was only fair that the agricultural interest should know the real extent to which they would be taxed. He contended that the Bill was not going to carry out the intentions of its promoters, and that while it was honestly believed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the largest estates would pay more, the small estates would be mulcted to a degree which no one had yet fathomed. What they were arguing for was the very point which hon. Gentlemen of the Radical Party had pressed so strongly on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Hon. Gentlemen opposite wished to see a distribution of property; but they took away the reason for distribution by taxing the *corpus* and not succession. The big men could sell, but the small man could not sell. If the big man was not satisfied with the award, thinking it too high, he could go into the High Courts. But the small man could not go into the High Courts. There was more chance of distribution being carried out by the big man; but it could not be carried out by the small man, because he could not afford to give up the property during his life. Was it expected that all those small estates would go into the

Chancellor of the Exchequer's maw? His information was that people were already making arrangements to give away their life estates, and, if so, big estates would escape. There was no difficulty in the way of the owner of a big estate giving a younger son £150,000 instead of paying £5,000 a year out of the land. But a man with £20,000 could not do that—he would require the money for himself during his lifetime, and so he would be mulcted to the uttermost farthing. He would put two cases before the House. The first was a case of settled property, whether realty or personalty, and the next was a case as between realty and personalty. With regard to settled property, he would really like to know did the Chancellor of the Exchequer wish to punish settlement? His own belief was that settlements were made by the most thrifty and careful class of the population. Take the case of a man who had amassed £20,000 and left it to his widow, settled upon his four children. Before this Bill they would pay £300. Now there was, first of all, the £50 stamp; then the new Estate Duty, 4 per cent., or £800, and 1 per cent. for settlement, bringing the total up to £1,000. Again, £5,000 to each of the four children would bring them each in £140 a year. That would barely cover the cost of educating a youth for one of the professions; and if it were a woman, unmarried, it would barely pay for her lodging, clothes, and food. But while the Chancellor of the Exchequer had such sympathy with persons with incomes of only £150 a year that he relieved them altogether from Income Tax, the right hon. Gentleman put on this £5,000 with which he was dealing a duty amounting to £75 extra, the interest of which would be more than the tax would be in the case of an industrial income. Therefore, while with one hand the right hon. Gentleman removed the Income Tax from these people, he with the other hand took out of their capital a sum more than equivalent to the Income Tax from which they were relieved. Moreover, if those people happened to be connected with land, they would have an extra charge of £2,000 or £3,000 for the privilege of having an elder brother to succeed to the land. It was said by the hon. Member for Wiltshire on the other side of the House that landowners objected to a commercial man coming and settling amongst them, and that they desired to retain a monopoly in land. As a matter of fact, there was nothing they desired so much as to get a good fat commercial man amongst them, who would subscribe to charities, and employ labour and assist in other ways.

MR. C. HOBHOUSE: I only quoted the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford.

MR. BRODRICK said, the landowners desired to see commercial men settling down amongst them, because they were the best centres of Toryism in the country districts they could possibly wish to see. But it was difficult to dispose of a portion of an estate that was mortgaged to meet the Estate Duty. The case of the Savernake estate was an instance of the difficulty of putting a mortgage on an estate already sufficiently mortgaged; and if they could not put on an extra mortgage, they could not in such a case sell sufficient of the estate to meet the Estate Duty, but would have to sell the whole estate in order to pay off the mortgages. The case of the small estates really deserved the serious attention of the Government. There was only one possible way of getting rid of the hardship of these small cases. They could only get equality of charge if they put the charge on the succession, and not on the *corpus*. That would enable the Government to get the distribution which they wished for, and, what was more, he believed they would realise very nearly as large a sum. He certainly would not get it on the *corpus*. Were they really to understand that it was the object of the right hon. Gentleman to break up the large estates? [Sir W. HARCOURT: No.] No, he believed it was not; but, as had been pointed out by his hon. Friend the Member for the West Derby Division, they would certainly plant them with mortgages, even if they did not break them up. Everybody knew, whatever might be said to the contrary by hon. Members opposite, that in nine cases out of ten an estate was better in the hands of one large landlord than if it were split up among 50 small landlords. What was wanted was to level up, but the effect of the Government proposal would be to squeeze out the best landlords, Hon. Members seemed to think that this was not a labour question; but he had before him the case of an estate the rental of which was £2,800 a year, and nearly the whole of that was expended in keeping up the estate; in fact, £1,450 went in labour, £550 in rates, &c., £350 in repairs of cottages, &c., and £65 in insurance. Therefore, this was really a labour question, and the Bill, although it was not intended to do so, would spread desolation in the villages. He hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his desire to pursue and torment big estates, would appreciate the effect his policy would have on the smaller estates. After the discussion that had taken place he felt that he had a right to be fortified with the view that the Bill, although it had been honestly drawn, seriously affected the smaller class of owners, while it was not at all clear that it would affect the large owners. It was always possible to get at the land, but personalty could be given away or invested in foreign securities. Large capitalists would evade these heavy duties, and men now worth millions would probably figure at their death as worth only £100,000. He therefore objected to the measure in its present form, regarding it as a discouragement of thrift, and as introducing the speculative element into the possession of land; and he hoped that if his hon. Friend did not go to a Division upon his present Amendment, he would raise the question in Committee. He was confident the Bill would not carry out the intentions of the framers, while it would cast grievous injury and injustice on an already overburdened class.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned," — (*Mr. Barton*,) – put, and agreed to.

Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

### INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL. (No. 184.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

**MR. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): I object.

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA** (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I hope the objection will not be pressed. This is a Bill to enable the Secretary of State in Council to have the same power as the House possesses under Standing Orders in reference to these Companies. No new powers are asked for, and I am sure the Government of India intend to carry out the policy embodied in the Bill, and to deal with existing and with new Companies in precisely the same manner.

**MR. BARTLEY** said, the right hon. Gentleman had promised that time would be given for the discussion of the Bill on the Second Reading, and he could not, under the circumstances, withdraw his objection.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

### COMMISSIONERS OF WORKS BILL. (No. 196.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. H. Gladstone.*)

**MR. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT** (Cheshire, Macclesfield): I think the House should be made acquainted with the character of this Bill.

*__THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS__ (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): It is an innocent Bill to facilitate the acquisition and disposal of sites by the Office of Works and to allow the utilisation for building purposes of the site of Millbank Prison Chapel which is now being demolished.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

### COMMONS.

Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.]

### FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND) EXTENSION OF POWERS BILL.—(No. 174.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

### BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 3) BILL. (No. 212.)

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Law, and

Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, to which the Building Societies (No. 2) Bill was committed.

### CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

Ordered, That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Rates, Tolls, and Charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to communicate this Resolution and desire their concurrence.—(*Mr. Burt.*)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 9) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the Acton, Chiswick, and Hanwell, the Chorley, the Fulstone and Hepworth, the Leigh, and the Pontefract Joint Hospital Districts, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 222.]

### VOLUNTEER ACTS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of the Volunteer Acts, and into the legal condition and status of Volunteers serving under these Acts.

Ordered, That Mr. Brown, Mr. Cubitt, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Sir Henry Fletcher, Mr. Gourley, Sir Arthur Hayter, Sir Edward Hill, Colonel Murray, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Stern, Colonel Howard Vincent, Mr. Warner, Mr. Wason, Sir James Whitehead, and Mr. Woodall be Members of the Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

### ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

### FATAL EXPLOSION AT WALTHAM ABBEY.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD** (Essex, Epping): Can the Secretary of State for War give the House any information as to the explosion at Waltham to-day?

**THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: I deeply regret to have to announce that an explosion of a serious character has occurred this afternoon at Waltham Abbey. It is the first serious accident that has occurred there in connection with the manufacture of explosives. It would appear that an explosion took place where the waste nitro-glycerine was stored, and in some way spread to the stores. The accident has had a fatal result, four men being killed and some 20 others injured. I cannot say anything further at present, but of course the House may rely upon this sad occurrence being made the subject of a most careful investigation. I hope to be able to give some further information to-morrow.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD**: I asked a question a short time ago about an explosion of waste cordite, which happily was not attended with such serious results. I wish to know whether this explosion was of the same description?

**MR. WOODALL**: On the occasion referred to by the hon. and gallant Member there were no injurious results to the persons employed. On that occasion the waste nitro-glycerine was purposely fired in order to destroy it; but on the present occasion there was no such intention, and it appeared to have been accidentally detonated, and the detonation spread to the actual store.

**MR. STUART-WORTLEY** (Sheffield, Hallam): This explosion has occurred in a Government factory, which is exempt from the Explosive Substances Act. I, therefore, hope that any inquiry that may be held will be directed to the point of seeing whether the same precautions are taken in this factory as are taken under the Act in any factory that is not under Government.

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR** (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The attention of the War Office was directed to that point by the previous explosion. There has been a full inquiry, in which Colonel Majendie took part, into the arrangements with regard to the gun factory itself, and with regard to those mechanical appliances which are connected with the manufacture of nitro-glycerine.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD**: When may we expect Papers on the subject?

**MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: If the Papers have not already been laid upon the Table, they will be so laid at once.

House adjourned at twenty-five
minutes after Twelve o'clock.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 8th May 1894.*

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## INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL.
(No. 28.)

### SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

***Lord MONKSWELL**, in the absence of the noble Marquess in charge of the Bill, who was, unfortunately, unable to come down to the House, moved the Second Reading. He explained that the Bill was to put Industrial and Provident Societies in the Channel Islands on the same footing as similar Societies in the United Kingdom. The Bill had come up from the Commons.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read $2^a$."—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read $2^a$ accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

## QUARTER SESSIONS BILL [H.L.]
(No. 48.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments made by the Lords to the Amendments made by the Commons, agreed to.

## CHARITABLE TRUSTS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].—(No. 12.)

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment.

## LAND TRANSFER BILL [H.L.].—(No. 19.)

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 52.)

## SOLICITORS' EXAMINATION BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 53.)

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL.
(No. 32.)

Read $3^a$ (according to Order), and passed.

## TRUSTEE ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 38.)

Read $3^a$ (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

## CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

Message from the Commons, That they have come to the following Resolution, to which they desire the concurrence of this House—namely, "That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under 'The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888,' containing the classification of merchandise traffic and the schedule of maximum rates, tolls, and charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons." The said Message to be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

## ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Boards for Barry United District, Bristol, Brotherton, Hornsey, Low Leyton, Liverpool, Sutton (Surrey), West Ham, Willesden, and York to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts—Was presented by the Lord President (*E. Rosebery*); read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 54.)

## EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Act, 1870, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts—Was presented by the Lord President (*E. Rosebery*); read $1^a$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 55.)

## PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing Petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.

## MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE.

The Lord Meldrum (*M. Huntly*) added to the Select Committee.

## HIGH SHERIFFS.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the fees and profits received by the High Sheriffs of counties or their deputies in the execution of their office, and the mode in which the duties of the High Sheriff now ordinarily performed by deputy may best be carried out."—(*The Earl of Camperdown*); agreed to.

The Lords following were named of the Committee:

E. Stanhope.
E. Belmore.
E. Camperdown.
L. Belper.
L. Leconfield.
L. Coleridge.
L. Monk Bretton.

The Committee to appoint their own Chairman.

### PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to make further provision for the establishment of Prize Courts; and for other purposes connected therewith—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read $1^{a}$; and to be printed. (No. 56.)

### FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND) EXTENSION OF POWERS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read $1^{a}$; and to be printed. (No. 57.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 8th May 1894.*

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### CAMBRIDGE CORPORATION BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

**MR. DODD** (Essex, Maldon) said, that as he was not in the House when the last Debate on this Bill took place he should like to state—though he had no intention of dividing the House—that he could not regard the settlement which had been arrived at as at all final. It was proposed to assimilate the conditions in Cambridge to those existing at Oxford, and he would tell the House of a case which occurred at Oxford soon after he left that University. A young lady, 18 or 19 years of age, the daughter of a tutor, went to hear a debate at the Union with her cousin and two other undergraduates. They left early, and at the corner of the Union passage, as the Proctor happened to be in sight, the undergraduates, according to the recognised custom of the day, a custom which enabled them to escape payment of the small fine for being without cap and gown, ran away, thinking nothing of the young lady's position. The Proctor's bulldogs seized the young lady and took her to the prison, asserting in answer to her explanations as to who she was that they knew her well. The prison matron, fortunately, perceived that a blunder had been made and caused inquiries to be instituted, which resulted in the young lady's liberation. If such an experience could happen to a well-dressed young lady, it was obvious that women of the poorer classes must be exposed to even greater danger, and, for that reason, he ventured to do that day what he would like to have done at greater length on the occasion of the Second Reading—to enter a strong protest against the compromise in the Bill.

**MR. FITZGERALD** (Cambridge) said, that as he understood the Third Reading of the Bill was not to be opposed he would confine his remarks, not to reply to the hon. and learned Member for Essex, but to a personal explanation on behalf of the late Mayor of Cambridge, Mr. S. L. Young. In his speech the other day the hon. Member for Crewe stated that he had seen more than one letter from Mr. Young stating that the Liberal members of the Town Council had had the opposed clause, to which they objected, forced upon them by the University. Mr. Young was his strongest political opponent, but he was a man of high honour and integrity, and he desired it to be known that he was not acting in the way which might naturally be inferred from the statement of the hon. Member for Crewe. The inference was that Mr. Young, having been an active and consenting party to the arrangement, and having promised his adhesion to the Bill, had written private letters to Members of Parliament asking them to try and defeat the Bill. But Mr. Young was incapable of such conduct, and he had written to him the following letter:—

"Dear Mr. FitzGerald,—You probably felt surprised at the quotation of Mr. M'Laren from my letter, and you might possibly imagine that the letter was conceived in a spirit of hostility to the Bill. The facts are as follows:—I wrote to Messrs. Hoare and Newnes expressing a hope that they would see their way clear to vote for the Bill; and the extract as to the Liberal Councillors was only a part of a sentence in which I pointed out that the Liberal Councillors did not, of course, approve of the clause, but that on the whole the compromise arrived at was felt by all parties to be the best that it was possible to obtain. . . . These are the portions of the letter Mr. M'Laren fastened upon. The terms of the letter seem to have commended themselves so much to Mr. Newnes that he unwisely sent my letter on to Mr. M'Laren. Hence the quotation of mutilated sentences. If you can suggest anything that the Liberal Party can do to help you on the Third Reading, I am sure you may rely on its being done."

I am glad to have had this opportunity of making a statement showing Mr. Young was incapable of any such conduct as the hon. Member for Crewe—no doubt inadvertently—imputed to him.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that the hon. Member had fairly stated the case for Mr. Young, and he had no complaint to make as to that, but the hon. Member was somewhat mistaken if he thought that the town of Cambridge was in favour of this exceptional jurisdiction. The town was strongly opposed to these exceptional powers, and the compromise was that the powers should be transferred to the police from the University. It was obvious that with these powers the most lamentable mistakes must occur. That was one of the reasons for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. In Cambridge there were large shops where shop-girls were employed; and these girls must pass through the streets to their homes late in the evening. While the daughters of the richer classes would not be exposed to the danger of arrest, the daughters of the poorer classes would be; and any constable by some mistake might drag a perfectly respectable girl to the station-house. If the daughters and wives of Members of the House were exposed to this danger, it would not be tolerated for a moment. The law might be desirable for the undergraduates, but it was extremely undesirable for the women of the poorer classes. They most strongly objected, and would continue to object, to that exceptional jurisdiction, so dangerous as it must prove to young women who were obliged to earn their subsistence in shops, and if his hon. Friend divided the House he should support him. It was a most unfair, unjust, and injurious law, and would not be tolerated in any other town than the two to which it applied.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, the opinion of the town of Cambridge must have greatly changed since he was acquainted with it if it desired this special legislation. The idea of the University always was to maintain this special legislation, while the desire of the town was to get rid of it and place matters on the same footing as elsewhere. He believed these special privileges or powers of the University had created so much scandal and opposition that it had practically become intolerable and could not be maintained. Under these circumstances, the University, as he understood it, had been preparing for some time to do away with the powers which they possessed which were so galling to the town, but in order to secure the keeping up of one part of the system, a provision had been inserted in the Bill under which the University authorities would still have exceptional powers of dealing with women. He could not doubt but what this was the pound of flesh which the town had had to pay to the University for the abolition of its special powers. What he wanted to point out was that the House had nothing to do with these private arrangements between the University and the town. What they had to consider was whether this proposed clause went beyond the law of the land. They maintained that it materially altered the law of the land and placed the women of Cambridge in a position of great disability, that it was a dangerous and injurious piece of legislation, and that as a fact the exceptional powers which the Universities possessed had led to a system of blackmailing both in Cambridge and in Oxford, and made it dangerous for respectable women to pass through the street. He had in his possession a letter from a theatrical manager who stated that when he went down to these towns he had to give a special warning to the female members of his company not to go into the streets alone, so dangerous was it for them to do so. He was by no means desirous of fixing upon the students at Cambridge any charge of immorality. He believed that for the most part they were a body of steady, honourable young men, but there were black sheep among them with whom the proctors ought to deal direct instead of running the risk of interfering with innocent women. It was quite possible, he was convinced, to deal with the matter in that way, and he saw no reason whatever why it should be difficult in a University town to preserve the students from the dangers to which they were exposed any more than elsewhere. He began by saying, and would say again, in conclusion that the opinion of the town of Cambridge had greatly changed since he was acquainted with it if it desired this exceptional legislation.

**Mr. CALDWELL** (Lanark, Mid): Upon a point of Order, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you, as this Bill is not down by Order, whether it is competent for this discussion to go on if there is an intention to take a Division?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Maldon Division, who opened the discussion, expressly said it was not his intention to divide the House. If there is any intention to take a Division the Bill must stand over.

Debate adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### PAUPER REMOVALS FROM SCOTLAND TO IRELAND.

**Mr. DANE** (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been drawn to the case of two paupers, named Neil M'Hugh and Michael Cairns, who, on the 18th April last, were deported from Greenock, and personally conducted by a removal officer, named White, to the Enniskillen Union Workhouse; is he aware that M'Hugh had spent 51 and Cairns 45 years working in Scotland, and that the former at the time of his deportation was suffering intense pain from a broken arm; what is the sanction for such deportation; and will he communicate with the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant with the view of amending the present law, which imposes upon Irish ratepayers the cost of supporting persons who have spent their life and labour out of the country that gave them birth?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Board of Supervision that the Inspector of Greenock does not know about the case referred to by the hon. Member, as the paupers mentioned were not chargeable to or removed by Greenock parish. But if the hon. Member will state the name of the parish which removed these men, the Inspector will at once communicate all the information that can be obtained. Removals are sanctioned by Sections 77, 78, and 79 of the Poor Law Act. The legislation contemplated by the last paragraph of the question would require very careful consideration.

### DOUBLE CANTEENS AT ALDERSHOT.

**Colonel MURRAY** (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the double canteens now built for the 1st Infantry Brigade at Aldershot, what special advantages are claimed for this system over the old system of a canteen for each regiment; whether the views of regimental authorities at Aldershot and other stations on this question have been obtained, and with what general result; and whether the existing double canteens have been built as an experiment only, or whether it is intended to extend the system at Aldershot and other stations where more than one regiment or battalion are quartered?

*__The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR__ (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling, &c.): The experience of the double canteens at Aldershot and Colchester is that they secure considerable economy of administration, as the staff for a double canteen but little exceeds that for a single one. This saving of expense renders a higher class of music and singing obtainable, and tends to keep the soldiers from frequenting less desirable places. The formation of two double canteens in the Stanhope lines at Aldershot was approved after carefully considering the views of the regimental authorities. The question must be considered to be as yet in the experimental stage.

### THE COLLECTION OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS.

**Mr. LEESE** (Lancashire, N.E., (Accrington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if any alteration of the system of collecting the agricultural statistics of Great Britain is contemplated; if he is aware that there are strong reasons for doubting the general trustworthiness of the annual Returns, owing to the great difficulties encountered in their collection, and the absence of power to compel unwilling occupiers to render accurate and prompt Returns; and that the present system of collection entails considerable hardship on the Excise officers who act as collectors; and if he is prepared to consider the desirability of requiring the statistics to be compiled by competent parish officials possessing the requisite adequate local knowledge?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am satisfied that the general trustworthiness of the Agricultural Returns is not affected either by difficulties in their collection or by omissions to render them. In both these respects improvement has been effected in recent years. The suggestion that the Returns should be compiled by parochial officers instead of by the officers of Inland Revenue has been made on more than one occasion, but it has always been considered that a change in that direction would be detrimental rather than otherwise, and I do not contemplate any alteration in the present system. It is not for me to express any opinion as to the position of the Inland Revenue officers in regard to the particular service in question. I can only say that, on the whole, we consider that the work entrusted to those officers is extremely well done.

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY UNION.

MR. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board are aware that over two years ago in the Edenderry Union Richard M'Namara, labourer, of Balrinnet, lodged a representation form under the Labourers' Acts, his own dwelling being condemned by the medical officer as unsanitary; that in view of the wretched house in which M'Namara lived, a local gentleman, Mr. Edward Robinson, voluntarily granted a site for his proposed cottage, notwithstanding that he (Mr. Robinson) had already 20 labourers living on his farm; that some weeks ago, on the completion of the cottage built by the Edenderry Board of Guardians on M'Namara's representation, the latter attended at the Board room to ask for possession, but was refused, and on the motion of Mr. W. Tyrell, J.P., possession was granted to a workman of his who had already a good house, though Mr. Tyrell had given no sites for labourers' cottages on his own farm; and whether the Local Government Board will direct the Edenderry Board of Guardians to at once transfer the cottage to M'Namara, and remedy the breach of the Labourers' Acts, 48 & 49 Vic. 3. 77, s. 17, caused by the latter living in a condemned dwelling-house after the Guardians were in a position to supply house accommodation for him?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The facts are stated with substantial accuracy in the first paragraph. Section 17 of the Act of 1885, which is alluded to in the question, prescribes that when the Guardians are in a position to supply house accommodation to the occupants of condemned dwellings they should take steps to have the old houses closed or demolished, and unless the new houses are let to the occupants of the unfit houses the object of the Acts in this respect would be defeated. In this instance, however, the majority of the Guardians are opposed to giving the cottage to M'Namara, and the Local Government Board have no power to transfer the cottage to him as asked. A man named Boyle who was selected by the Guardians has, as a matter of fact, signed the usual agreement of tenancy and entered into possession of the premises.

MR. KENNEDY: Is there any means of compelling this Conservative Board of Guardians to carry out the spirit of the Act?

MR. J. MORLEY: No. The Local Government Board have no power to override the decision of the Board of Guardians in this matter.

### CROFTERS' COMMISSION APPEALS.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been called to the last Report of the Crofters' Commission, which states that 683 cases of appeal are awaiting a hearing, and that the Chairman must be present when appeals are taken; and, seeing that the Chairman of this Commission is also Chairman of the Deer Forest Commission, how does he propose to deal with these 683 cases awaiting the decision of the Commission, without serious inconvenience, if not injustice, to all concerned?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I am informed by the Crofters' Commission that it is the fact that the number of appeals mentioned await hearing. Their last Report specially refers to that number, and to the fact that, but for the very severe weather which prevailed during November and December of last year, it would have been considerably reduced. The Commission propose to overtake as many of these appeals as possible at an early date, and it accordingly seems necessary to make exceptional arrangements for their disposal.

DR. MACGREGOR: As the Chairman has been ill so long, is it not desirable to appoint a new Chairman, so that the appeals may be proceeded with?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The Chairman, after a severe illness—the first he has had during the hard labours of the past six or eight years—believes he will be sufficiently well to resume work on or about the 21st instant.

## ADMIRALTY CONTRACTS AT PAISLEY.

MR. KEIR-HARDIE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the firm of Hannah, Donald, and Wilson, of Paisley, which has a contract from the Admiralty for the construction of two torpedo destroyers, pays its labourers 15s. 9d. and its hammermen 16s. 10d. per week, and its blacksmiths 3s. per week under the Trades Union rate; and, if so, whether he will insist upon Trades Union rates being paid, or have the contract withdrawn from the firm?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Admiralty have no information on the subject of the hon. Member's question except that which it conveys. If the workpeople or the Trades Union address any specific complaint to me or to the Admiralty, it shall be thoroughly investigated according to the system adopted in respect to all such complaints.

*Dr. Macgregor*

## GLEBE AND TITHE RENT-CHARGE IN WALES.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, before the Motion for the Second Reading of the Established Church (Wales) Bill, he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return, by parishes and counties, of the property of the Church in Wales in glebe and tithe rent-charge, showing in each case whether such property would be devoted by the Bill to parochial purposes or to the central fund; and whether he would include in such Return a statement of the tithe rent-charge in each parish belonging to colleges and schools, or to lay impropriators?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The latest information as to the quantity of glebe land in Wales and elsewhere is contained in the Glebe Lands Return of 1887, and, as to tithe, in the Commutation of Tithes Return of the same year. It would be possible to compile from these Returns a statement (*a*) of the quantity and estimated gross rental of glebe land belonging to benefices in Welsh dioceses, and (*b*) a statement of the tithe rent-charge in each parish in a Welsh diocese, distinguishing between the sums payable to clerical appropriators, to parochial incumbents, to lay impropriators, and to colleges, schools, &c. But the Home Office has no information as to the extent to which the figures given in the Glebe Lands Return have been affected by operations under the Act to facilitate the sale of glebe lands (the Glebe Lands Act, 1888) passed in 1888; and it would certainly not be possible to prepare, before the Second Reading of the Bill, a Return such as the hon. Gentleman asks for, showing how each description of property would be allocated on its becoming law.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman can give the House any idea when the Second Reading of the Welsh Church Disestablishment Bill will be taken?

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir.

### WELSH CATHEDRALS.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant the Return on this day's Paper as to the sums spent on the restoration of the Welsh cathedrals?

Mr. ASQUITH: I am informed by the chapter clerk of St. Asaph that he can give a Return, but not one absolutely complete; the chapter clerk of Llandaff is unable to give one with any pretence to accuracy, and from the remaining two chapter clerks I have had no reply to my communication. Under these circumstances, I think it is useless for the hon. Member to press for the Return.

### WELSH CHURCH REVENUES.

Mr. D. THOMAS (Methyr Tydfil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant the Return, standing on the Paper this day, relating to the Revenues of the Welsh Church?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have been in communication with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners on the subject of this Return, but I understand that there will be no meeting of the Commissioners until the 10th of this month, when they will consider the practicability of granting this Return. Perhaps my hon. Friend would put this question to me again after the Whitsuntide holidays.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford): Are we to understand that the Welsh Church includes the English Church in the English County of Monmouthshire?

Mr. ASQUITH: I must refer the hon. Member to the speech I made in introducing the Bill.

### EXPORTATIONS OF OPIUM FROM INDIA TO CHINA.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what were the figures of chests of opium exported from India to China in the months of October, November, December, 1892 and 1893, and of January, February, and March, 1893 and 1894 respectively?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The number of chests of opium exported from India to China during the months named were—

| | 1892. | 1893. | 1894. |
|---|---|---|---|
| October......... | 5,619 | 6,591 | |
| November...... | 6,332 | 6,647 | |
| December...... | 4,410 | 5,027 | |
| January ...... | | 3,442 | 5,521 |
| February ...... | | 3,815 | 3,795 |
| March ......... | | 4,448 | 2,498 |

Mr. DANE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when we may expect to have the Report of the Opium Commission?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I am absolutely without information on that point.

### EVICTION IN CAITHNESS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has received any communication from Caithness regarding the proposed eviction of Mr. James Laurie, of Howe; whether he has been informed that Mr. Laurie is being evicted for being chairman of the Crofters' Land Law Reform Association of Caithness; whether he is aware that Mr. Laurie is the member of the County Council for his district, and much respected; and is it the intention of the people, as expressed by resolution at public meetings, to prevent the eviction; whether, under these circumstances, he will use the forces of the Crown to assist in the proposed eviction; and whether the Government will bring in legislation to prevent working cultivators, like Mr. Laurie, from being similarly evicted?

Sir G. TREVELYAN: In reply to the hon. Member, I received a communication from Caithness-shire last month, which, in the shape in which it reached me, did not disclose a state of facts with respect to which the Secretary for Scotland could effectively interfere. I requested the applicant to state more particularly the facts of the case, and to explain upon what grounds my intervention was sought, but have as yet received no reply. I trust, therefore, that it is a case in which an amicable agreement may be arrived at between the landlord and tenant.

### COMMON LAND ENCLOSURES IN FLINTSHIRE.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that a piece of common land, three acres in extent, situate in the township of Ewloe Town, Buckley, Flintshire, has been recently let or leased by the Lord of the Manor to Major J. M. Gibson, of the Engineer Volunteers, for any purpose, and for a term of years; that the land is now being enclosed with corrugated iron seven feet high; and that the public footpaths will be either blocked or diverted by the enclosures; and whether the consent of the Board of Agriculture has been either asked or given to the proposal?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I have received a communication containing statements to the effect set out in the question of my hon. Friend, and I have replied that no application for the consent of the Board of Agriculture to the enclosure of any part of the common in question has been received. I have no jurisdiction to take the initiative, or, indeed, any active steps, in stopping encroachments on commons; but when the Local Government Act comes into force, the District Councils will be in a position to investigate complaints, such as that made in the present instance, and it will be competent for them, with the consent of the County Council, to aid commoners in maintaining their rights, if they think the extinction of such rights would be prejudicial to the inhabitants of the district.

## EASTERN PONDOLAND.

**Mr. WHITELEY** (Stockport): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that Natal merchants and traders have largely invested capital in Eastern Pondoland and upon the borders, and that the trade with Eastern Pondoland has hitherto been carried on almost entirely from Natal as a basis, any provision is included in the terms of annexation of Eastern Pondoland by the Cape Colony which shall prevent harsh and unnecessary restrictions or regulations designed to, or having the effect of, diverting unjustly the Natal trade to the Cape Colony?

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES** (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The annexation of Pondoland to the Cape will carry with it the usual consequences, fiscal and other, unless modified by agreement between the Ministers of the Cape and Natal, between whom the Secretary of State cannot interfere.

*Mr. S. Smith*

**Mr. WHITELEY**: Has a Customs House already been established, as announced in *The Times*?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: I am not sure as to that.

## ASSISTANT MASTERS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

**Mr. C. ROUNDELL** (York, W.R., Skipton): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether the Charity Commissioners recognise as a proper object of policy, and will henceforth be prepared to enable pension schemes for assistant masters of secondary schools to be framed, subject to their sanction in proper cases, and subject to proper conditions?

**The PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER** (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): No action on the part of the Charity Commissioners is required to enable plans of insurance for pensions for assistant masters of secondary schools to be framed, unless it is proposed that the pension fund should be aided from endowment. There are few cases in which such aid can legitimately be afforded for financial reasons. In proper cases, and subject to proper conditions, the Commissioners will be prepared to further the object indicated.

## REGISTRATION OF LAND TITLES IN IRELAND.

**Mr. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of applications for the registration of the ownership of land in Ireland made under Sections 22 and 23 of "The Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891," still remaining undisposed of; how many of these applications have been made upwards of a year ago; what number of these cases come under the provision for the compulsory registration of land sold under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts; what is the usual time taken to register with respect to the transmission of registered land under the 37th section of the Act; whether he is aware of the great inconvenience to the owners which the unreasonable delay in the work of registration involves; and if he will explain the cause of the delay, and take some steps to have it remedied and the applications disposed of as soon as possible?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The number of applications under Sections 22 and 23 of the Act still remaining undisposed of is 8,200. The number of such applications which were lodged upwards of a year ago is 7,622. All these cases fall within the compulsory provisions of the Act. The Registrar of Titles informs me that if the documents are duly lodged, fees punctually paid, and no legal questions arise, the registration of transmission cases under the 37th section can be completed in a few days. I understand that, generally speaking, the delay in registration is largely attributable to applicants themselves, who fail to comply promptly with the requisitions issued to them by the Registrar of Titles. In this connection I may observe that out of 8,200 cases at present remaining undisposed of requisitions have been issued in 5,750 cases, and that in 970 of these cases only have replies been received, leaving some 4,780 cases in which the applicants for six, nine, or 12 months have made no response to the requisitions sent out.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that these requisitions very commonly involve the applicants in very considerable expense?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I was not aware of that fact.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I wish to ask whether this very heavy arrear of 7,000 cases is due to the insufficiency of the staff or to the insufficiency of the annual provision made by the Treasury; and whether, considering that the tenant-purchaser cannot sell as tenant whilst his title is unregistered, the right hon. Gentleman will urge the Treasury to make better arrangements?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have had it under consideration for some months, as perhaps my hon. Friend knows, whether the staff at the disposal of the Land Commission was sufficient. I understand, however, that the block in the registration of title cases would be cleared off within the next 12 months, even with the present staff, if the applicants would be a little more prompt and full in their responses to the requisitions.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether or not the Registering Authority can themselves undertake the expenses of the requisitions? These expenses are in the shape of stamps levied by the Registry of Deeds in Ireland, sometimes very heavy, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Registering Authority would themselves undertake the necessary securities?

Mr. DANE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware if there was not a clause in the Act which provided for the free registration of these compulsory purchase cases of the Land Commission?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am aware of the whole business. As my hon. and learned Friend knows, I inserted this in the original Reference to the Commission now sitting upstairs as one of the heads of inquiry, and I regret exceedingly that, owing to what the House is aware of, it was not possible to include that. As, however, it has been excluded, of course it will be my duty when I can get any leisure at all to proceed as if the Commission had themselves inquired into it. I recognise the importance of the matter fully, and I will do the best I can.

Mr. SEXTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman noticed there are 2,000 cases in which no requisitions have been sent out, and can he say why they cannot be dealt with?

Mr. J. MORLEY replied in the negative.

## MILITIA SERGEANTS' PAY.

Mr. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War will he explain the grounds on which the non-commissioned officers on the permanent Militia Staffs are divided into two classes, one being the men on Army engagements, and the other the men on Militia engagements; also why the pay of a sergeant on an Army engagement is 3s. 6½d. per day, and the pay of a sergeant on a Militia engagement 2s. 4d. per day; and why a sergeant on an Army engagement after 21 years' service is entitled to a pension of 2s. 3d. per day, in addition to £63 deferred pay, while a sergeant on a Militia engagement after 27 years' service is only entitled to a maximum pension of 1s. per day; what is the number of non-commissioned officers serving in Ireland on the permanent Militia Staffs on

Militia engagements; and whether, as the duties of these non-commissioned officers serving on Militia engagements are the same as those of non-commissioned officers serving on Army engagements, he will be prepared to recommend that the pay and allowances of the former class be put on an equality with the latter?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: These Militia sergeants on the Permanent Staff are the remanant of an old class which is rapidly disappearing. None have been appointed since 1881, and there are not more than 300 or 400 left out of a total of over 4,000. There are no reasons for putting them on the same footing as non-commissioned officers appointed direct from the Army who are members of the depôt, and have Army as well as Militia duties. There are 70 non-commissioned officers serving on the permanent Staff of the Irish Militia on their Militia engagement. Their period of service will very shortly expire.

### EXAMINATIONS IN THE POSTAL TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

Mr. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether vacancies in the various superintending engineers offices, together with such as occur at relay stations, are filled by competitive examination amongst members of the Postal Telegraph Service; and if not, whether he will consider the advisability of adopting such a course?

*The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): The situations to which the hon. Member refers are filled by selection from amongst those telegraphists who possess the necessary special qualifications. There is no competitive examination, and, as at present advised, I do not think it would be for the benefit of the Service to introduce one.

Mr. STOCK: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that many men in the office devote a great deal of time in fitting themselves to fill vacancies in the engineering Department. Does he think selection is better than competitive examination in these cases?

Mr. A. MORLEY: In my opinion, the present system works most beneficially for the Service.

*Mr. Tully*

### NEWTON ABBOT WORKHOUSE.

Sir S. NORTHCOTE (Exeter): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what action he proposes to take in connection with the recent Departmental Inquiry into the condition of the Newton Abbot Workhouse?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): The Report of the Inspectors by whom the Inquiry referred to was held has been received by the Local Government Board and is now under consideration.

### WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS IN INDIA.

Mr. CAINE (Bradford, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if any compensation has been given to Sagal Samba Sajow and the six other Manipuris who were convicted of murder and sentenced to death or transportation for life by the Sessions Judge of Sylhet, which sentence was reversed and the prisoners all acquitted by the High Court of Calcutta after five months' imprisonment on the declared grounds that false evidence, tutored by the police and obtained by torture and other illegal practices, was submitted to the Sessions Judge, and that every Magistrate and Judge who tried the case in its various stages had been guilty of numerous and serious irregularities in the course of the proceedings, both before and during the trial?

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Until I receive from the Government of India the Papers regarding the Baladhun case, I am unable to say whether there is any ground for giving compensation to the Manipuris who were accused of the murder of Mr. Cockburn.

### THE BALADHUN MURDER CASE.

Mr. CAINE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he has yet received the full Papers relating to the Baladhun murder case, promised by the Government of India some months ago; and, if so, will he lay upon the Table of the House the full official Reports of the proceedings before the Magistrates and the District Sessions Court of Silchar, the proceedings before the Criminal Apellate Bench at Calcutta, and all Correspondence on the trials between the

Government of India and the Government of Assam, and the Government of India and the India Office ?

***Mr. H. H. FOWLER** : The Papers regarding the Baladhun case have not yet reached me, and I am, therefore, at present unable to say what Papers can be given.

**Mr. CAINE** : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the special punitive police force, quartered on suspected villages in the neighbourhood of Baladhun, has been removed ; and if, in view of the judgment of the High Court of Calcutta acquitting the inhabitants of these villages charged with the murder of Mr. Cockburn, the manager of the Baladhun tea garden, it is intended to return to the authorities of these villages the sums of money levied for the maintenance of the police ?

***Mr. H. H. FOWLER** : In reply to my hon. Friend's question, I beg to state that the punitive police which were quartered on suspected villages round Baladhun had been found necessary quite independently of the murder of Mr. Cockburn and before it occurred.

## SUFFOCATED IN A LONDON SEWER.

**Mr. MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that three workmen were sent by the Local Authorities into the sewers near Stamford Street on the 4th instant, who in the course of their work were overcome by noxious gases, two of them being found dead in the sewer and one unconscious ; and what steps he proposes taking for the better protection of workmen's lives whilst engaged in such dangerous employment ?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE** : My attention had not previously been drawn to the deaths mentioned from noxious gases in the sewers, and I have no information as to whether any responsibility attaches to the Local Authority in the matter. I will obtain copies of the depositions at the inquest in the cases referred to.

## FOREST GATE SCHOOLS.

**Mr. ARCHIBALD GROVE** (West Ham, N.) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the recent disclosures at Forest Gate schools, any steps are being taken to secure an efficient inspection of such schools, and to provide that pauper children receive a proper supply of wholesome and nutritious food ; and whether he is prepared to consider a general extension of the "boarding out" system, in lieu of the system which now extensively prevails of herding together the children of the indigent poor in such numbers that they are deprived of the benefit of home influences and of due supervision and protection ?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE** : The attack of illness which occurred at the Forest Gate schools, and which it was supposed may have resulted from the food supplied to certain children on a particular day, cannot be regarded as affording any evidence that the children in this school or in other Poor Law schools of the Metropolis generally are not provided with a supply of wholesome and nutritious food. The question as to the food provided in the schools is one which continually receives the attention of the Visiting Committees. Whilst the Local Government Board concur in the view that the boarding out of pauper children when there is a proper selection of the homes, and a careful supervision of the children boarded out, has many advantages, it is quite clear that the boarding out system cannot be adopted generally as a substitute for the Poor Law schools. It is, however, the desire of the Board, in the case of all new schools, to avoid as far as possible the aggregation of a large number of children in one building, and this is a point which it is their practice to press upon Boards of Guardians.

## THE REGISTRAR GENERAL'S REPORT FOR 1892.

**Mr. COURTNEY** (Cornwall, Bodmin) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Report of the Registrar General for 1892 will be published, the Report for 1891 having been published more than two years since ?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE** : I am informed by the Registrar General that his Annual Report for 1891 was issued in January, 1893, and that the Report for 1892 is in the hands of the printers, and it is expected will be published in a few days.

### DANGEROUS AMUSEMENTS AT FAIRS.

Mr. FELL PEASE (York, N.R., Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to an accident which happened at Darlington, on Monday, the 30th of April, when four children were seriously injured by the breaking of a bolt in an over-head boat in which they were swinging; and whether he will consider the question of appointing an Inspector in each town who can examine the state of the various machines used at fairs and markets for the amusement of children, such as steam whirley-go-rounds, switchback boats, and similar contrivances?

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes; the Local Authorities have already power to regulate the use of whirligigs and swings driven by steam power. I think any proposal to extend that power, and to give to the Local Authorities the right of inspection, would deserve favourable consideration from Parliament.

### WADELAI.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can confirm or give any information as to the reported hoisting of the British flag at Wadelai; and whether, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, Wadelai is within the British sphere of influence?

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Colonel Colville's expedition against the King of Unyoro has been successful; and has Major Owen raised the British flag at Wadelai, on the Nile?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): A telegram has been received to the effect that Major Owen reached Wadelai on the 4th of February and hoisted the British flag, and that the war in Unyoro is at an end.

### VACCINATION AT HONG KONG.

Mr. SMITH BARRY (Hunts, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps will be taken to provide a salary for the Superintendent of the Government Vaccinating Institute at Hong Kong, an office which entails much extra work and responsibility upon the Colonial Veterinary Surgeon, and for which he, at present, receives no remuneration whatever?

Mr. S. BUXTON: In his original letter of appointment the gentleman now holding the position of Colonial Veterinary Surgeon was told that his services would be held to be available for any duties upon which the Governor, in the interests of the Public Service, might think it desirable to employ him. The Governor considers that the work which he is now called upon to do in connection with the Vaccine Establishment is of such a nature that the Veterinary Surgeon may fairly be expected to perform it without additional remuneration, and the Secretary agrees in this view.

### GLOVE FIGHT NEAR CLAPHAM.

Mr. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has seen the account of a so-called glove fight at the Bolingbroke Hall, half a mile from Clapham Junction, on Friday night last, the 4th of May, and if he is aware that, notwithstanding the drafting of mounted police into the neighbourhood, a scene occurred in the Northcote Road which greatly scandalised the inhabitants; and if he will take measures to render such gatherings illegal?

Mr. ASQUITH: There were boxing competitions at this hall on the night in question, and a certain amount of excitement as to the result of one of the contests was manifested by a large number of persons congregated outside the Hall. This excitement, I am informed, continued for some little time after the result was known, and four mounted men assisted the foot police in keeping order. No assaults were reported, but two men were charged with larceny from the person.

Mr. THORNTON: The right hon. Gentleman says there have been no assaults; but is he aware that the orgies were kept up till 2 o'clock in the morning, and that tradesmen were afraid to open their shops?

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir.

Mr. THORNTON: I shall take an early opportunity of calling attention to this matter.

### POSTMASTERS' PRIVATE AGENCIES.

**MR. BUCHANAN** (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General how many postmasters who are also bank or insurance agents will, under the Regulation issued by him, be obliged to give up their postmasterships; how many of these are in Scotland; and whether he will agree to make the Order to apply only to future appointments, or will make an exception of those whose term of service as postmaster has exceeded a certain number of years, or whose dismissal from the postmastership would cause grave inconvenience to the locality?

**MR. A. MORLEY**; The Regulation recently issued by which postmasters are prohibited from holding bank or insurance agencies has elicited a large number of appeals. These appeals are now under consideration, and I am unable to say at present what exceptions, if any, it may be possible to make to the Rule.

### UGANDA.

**MR. LABOUCHERE**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the exact frontiers of the Kingdom of Uganda which it is proposed to include within the new British protectorate; whether the Kingdom of Unyoro is included within that protectorate; whether any of the Kingdoms that are stated by Sir Gerald Portal in his Report to have paid tribute to Uganda are included in that protectorate; whether the British authorities in Uganda received permission from Her Majesty's Government to attack the Kingdom of Unyoro before attacking that Kingdom; whether he can state the number of slaves that are annually released by Her Majesty's vessels, who have been embarked in slave ships from Zanzibar and the adjacent coast, and what is the estimated number of slaves annually shipped from thence, but who are not released; whether any of the porters who were employed by Sir Gerald Portal were slaves; and what is the estimated number of persons now held in slavery in Zanzibar, and in the coast territories now administered by the Chartered Company of West Africa? I may add this question: Is Wadelai within the British protectorate; and, if not, how is the British flag to be maintained after being hoisted there?

**SIR E. GREY**: To the first three paragraphs of the hon. Member's questions I can only repeat the answer that I gave to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham a few days ago—that it is not possible to deal with these matters in the compass of an answer to a question, and that the explanations with regard to them must be reserved until the Debate, when a full statement will be made on these and other points. In answer to the fourth paragraph, as I stated on the 20th of March, I can make no further statement till fuller information has been received. As was stated on the 19th of April, the number of slaves released annually by Her Majesty's vessels for the last five years amounts to 257; the number shipped, and not released, is believed to be very few. Some of the porters employed in Sir G. Portal's caravan, as in all caravans in this part of Africa, no doubt were slaves, but in this case, as in others, the contract for work was made directly with the men, and not with their masters. In answer to the last paragraph, I can only say that we have no census of the population, and I can give no estimate, but the great complaints of the increasing scarcity of labour in Zanzibar prove that the number of slaves is diminishing. No instructions, I may add, have been sent to occupy Wadelai, but we are waiting for full information.

**MR. LABOUCHERE**: May I ask whether, as is to be presumed, Her Majesty's Government have made up their minds to assume a Protectorate; if so, over what portion of the country it is to be assumed; and whether the hon. Gentleman will furnish the House with a map with the frontiers of the Protectorate clearly defined?

***MR. J. A. PEASE** (Northumberland, Tyneside): Is it not a fact that the larger portion of the pay which the slaves receive is handed back by the slaves to those slave masters, who practically let them out?

**MR. DARLING** asked whether, as a slave was the property of some one else, he could make a contract?

**SIR E. GREY**: At the present moment there is a great scarcity of labour in Zanzibar. As to pay, I understand that the contract is made with the men, and care is taken that while they are engaged in the expedition they shall be fairly treated, but I cannot say what further arrangements are made. A map has for some time been in preparation, and I hope it will be distributed to-morrow.

**Sir C. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): May I ask whether the hon. Member means another map beyond the one which has been distributed? The map already sent out does not show Wadelai.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: I should like to know whether, in the map about to be presented, the northern boundary of our sphere of influence will be distinctly marked?

**Sir E. GREY**: That is a point on which a full statement is reserved for Debate, and it is impossible to prepare a map until that statement has been made.

**Mr. LABOUCHERE**: Am I to understand that the only map we are to have is the one in which the frontiers of the contemplated Protectorate are not laid down, and on which Wadelai is not shown?

**Sir E. GREY**: Will the hon. Gentleman show me the map to which he refers; I shall then be able to understand what he refers to?

**Sir C. DILKE**: On the Motion for the adjournment of the House, on Thursday, I will ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to name a day for the Debate on Uganda.

***Mr. J. A. PEASE**: With regard to the alleged increased scarcity of labour, and the hon. Baronet's statement that the number of slaves is diminishing in Zanzibar, may I ask if however it is not a fact that the production due to slave labour from the clove plantations has been greater during last year, than in some previous years?

**Sir E. GREY**: I require notice of a question as to the production of the clove plantations.

## THE IRISH MAIL CONTRACT.

**Mr. W. KENNY** (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has yet come to a decision on the question which has been before him for so many months with reference to terminating the existing contract for the conveyance of the mails between London and Dublin; and if he will state what determination he has arrived at?

*Sir E. Grey*

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: The subject to which the hon. Member refers is receiving the closest attention, but it is one of great magnitude, and the Government have not yet arrived at a definite decision.

**Mr. W. KENNY**: That is the same answer we have been receiving for the last two or three months. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman when he will be able to reply definitely?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: There are great difficulties surrounding the subject which have to be very carefully considered connected not only with the postal and railway system in England but in Ireland also. These subjects have to be very carefully considered, but we hope to arrive at a conclusion shortly.

**Mr. DANE**: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Government will have arrived at a decision before the close of the present Session?

**Mr. MAURICE HEALY**: Could he say, whether they have come to a decision or not, if they will invite tenders when making the new contract?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: That is a subject upon which, as I stated, no definite decision has been arrived at. It is a question we can only decide when we have considered all the surrounding circumstances.

## THE AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

**Mr. W. KENNY**: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that since the month of July, 1893, the mail steamers *Majestic* or *Teutonic* have on nine occasions left New York in company with the *Paris* or *New York*, and that eight times out of the nine the *Majestic* or *Teutonic* has made the faster passage; and if he will state on how many of those occasions the mails carried by the *Majestic* or *Teutonic* were delivered in London before those of the other vessels?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: Since July, 1893, there have been 10 occasions on which the *Majestic* or *Teutonic* has left New York on the same day and at about the same hour as the *Paris* or *New York*. The result has been that mails brought by the two British vessels have on four occasions been delivered in London earlier and on two occasions later than those brought by the two American vessels. On the four remaining occasions the mails were delivered in London simultaneously.

Mr. **MAURICE HEALY**: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether within the past 12 months the American Post Office have made any change in their system of despatching the mails, and in the selection of vessels to carry them?

Mr. **A. MORLEY**: If the hon. Member will put it down on the Paper I will try and find out, but there is no change so far as I am aware.

### THE CORDITE EXPLOSION AT WALTHAM ABBEY.

Mr. **J. ROWLANDS** (Finsbury, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can give the House any information as to the cause of the reported explosion at the Government cordite factory at Waltham yesterday?

Mr. **HANBURY** (Preston): May I inquire whether this is not the fourth explosion which has occurred during the present year at Waltham; whether it is not the fact that the manufacture of explosives at Government factories is free from the strict Rules and Regulations which the Home Office impose in the case of all private factories; and whether such a dangerous exemption ought not to be abolished?

*The **FINANCIAL SECRETARY** to the **WAR OFFICE** (Mr. Woodall, Hanley): No cause can as yet be assigned for the serious and destructive explosion that occurred yesterday at Waltham, wrecking the washing-house and nitro-glycerine stores at the cordite factory and causing the deaths of the chemist in charge, two foremen, and one other man, who were following their employment at the time. Happily the other men who were injured, chiefly by falling *débris*, are making satisfactory progress. A searching investigation will be immediately instituted into all the circumstances. It was not very convenient to answer the hon. Member for Preston, but the hon. Member knows that there was one very fatal accident in the powder factory which formed the subject of an inquiry. Another explosion occurred in the cordite factory, but it was not in connection with any part of the process of manufacture. It was caused by a wholly irregular and unauthorised experiment, and the only person seriously injured was the man who on his own responsibility was making the experiment. In the other case a more violent explosion than was anticipated did, unfortunately, take place in the destruction of a quantity of waste nitro-glycerine, but without any personal injury. As to the Regulations under which Government factories are carried on, they are exempt from the ordinary law, but in the main they are carried on with a degree of strictness which has insured for them until very recently a remarkable immunity from accident.

Mr. **HANBURY**: Then I will ask whether, in view of the four explosions which have occurred at Waltham, the War Office are prepared to put Government factories under the same Rules and Regulations for the safety of life as apply in the case of private factories?

*Mr. **WOODALL**: I think that notice should be given of this question.

Mr. **GIBSON BOWLES** (Lynn Regis): Have the four explosions shaken the confidence of the Secretary for War in cordite?

*Mr. **WOODALL**: We have expressed our confidence in the efficiency of cordite as an explosive. I do not think anybody ever suggested its manufacture was not attended with danger.

Sir **H. ROSCOE** (Manchester, S.): Was any scientific chemist in charge of the manufacture?

*Mr. **WOODALL**: Yes, a practical foreman chemist was employed, and unfortunately he was one of those killed in the last accident.

### COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

Mr. **HOPWOOD** (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has been able to consider the Report of the Judges in 1892 to the Home Office recommending the constitution of a Court of Appeal and revision of sentences in criminal cases, with a view of carrying out the suggestion by legislation; and whether he will lay upon the Table a Paper of so much of the Report as includes the above recommendation, along with the letter from the Lord Chancellor initiating the action of the Judges upon the subject?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I have considered this Report, which raises a number of difficult questions. I have no present intention of introducing legislation on the subject. The Report has not been laid on the Table of the House, but the Lord Chancellor sees no objection to laying it if my hon. Friend desires. There was no letter of the Lord Chancellor initiating the meeting, which was simply assembled by formal notice.

### COLONIAL TRADING AGREEMENT.

**Colonel HOWARD VINCENT** (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if representations have been made to Her Majesty's Government by the Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner for Canada, the Hon. Robert Reid, Minister of Defence of Victoria, specially delegated by his Government, and the Hon. Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, Chief Secretary of Queensland, supported by the Agents General of the other leading Colonies, for the amendment of Section 3 of "The Australasian Customs Act, 1873," which in its present form is limited to the Australasian Colonies alone, and thus prevent dependencies of the Empire distant from each other from concluding mutually advantageous and preferential trading arrangements with each other; and whether it has been decided by the Government to accede to the wishes of the Colonies in this matter?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative; as regards the second part of the question the matter is still under consideration.

### THE PLATE DUTIES.

**Baron F. de ROTHSCHILD** (Bucks, Aylesbury): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to an evasion of the law requiring dealers in gold and silver watches, plate, and jewellery to take out a licence by large firms in London, Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool appointing unlicensed agents to form watch, plate, and jewellery clubs; whether he is aware that there are upwards of 20,000 of these so-called agents trading at the present time without any licence in about 1,600 towns and large villages in the United Kingdom, but who *bonâ fide* sell gold and silver watches, plate, and jewellery; and whether he is aware that Government servants, such as Post Office officials, are working these so-called agencies, and receiving promissory notes in part payment from the subordinate officials in the Post Office; and, if such is the case, whether he would take steps to have the law carried out?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I have had within the last few days my attention called to this matter. The practice complained of seems to me unsatisfactory. I will cause inquiries to be made with a view to put a stop to it.

**Mr. J. ROWLANDS**: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of granting a Committee to deal with the whole question of the application of the plate licence in its effect on the retail trade?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I will consider that.

### THE BUDGET AND INDUSTRIAL ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

**Sir H. MAXWELL** (Wigton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the effect of Clause 8 of the Finance Bill upon the operations of Industrial Assurance Companies has been calculated; whether under this clause it would become impossible for any such Company to pay any money in respect of a policy of assurance, however small, until the Commissioners have certified there is no Estate Duty recoverable; and whether he has realised the results upon the working classes of delaying the payments in respect of such policies, which are usually effected for funeral expenses?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: My attention has been called to this matter. I shall be prepared to propose in Committee an alteration to meet the hon. Member's objection.

### SCOTCH CHURCH DISESTABLISHMENT.

**Sir M. STEWART** (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Church of Scotland Bill, introduced by the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow, is the measure foreshadowed in Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech, and is intended to take the place of the promised Government Bill; and, if not, do the Government propose to bring in a

Bill this Session to disestablish and disendow the Church of Scotland?

SIR G. TREVELYAN (who replied) said: It does not appear likely in the state of public business that the Government will at present be able to introduce the Bill mentioned in Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech.

SIR M. STEWART: Do the Government propose to take over the Bill of the hon. Member for the College Division and make it their own?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I have answered the question in a single word.

### ACCOMMODATION IN THE HOUSE.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will arrange to have the Motion to appoint a Committee to consider the accommodation provided for Members and officials of this House, &c., taken at an early hour, so that the Committee may get to work?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am afraid I cannot promise my hon. Friend an early hour on this or any other day in order to deal with this question.

### THE EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of the fact that the House has been counted out on the two last Friday nights, whether the Government will see its way to appropriate the remaining Friday nights from after Whitsuntide to the end of the Session; and whether he will arrange for the Second Reading of the Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill on one of such nights?

MR. J. ROWLANDS also asked if, as the Returning Officers' Expenses Bill had secured the first place on the Friday after the holidays, the Government proposed for the second time in one Session to deprive the House of a chance of debating it?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I need not say that the Government are always ready to appropriate any time, but I will postpone answering that part of the question. I can only say, in answer to the second part of the question, that we are very anxious to take the earliest opportunity of promoting the Second Reading of the Equalisation of Rates Bill.

### NEW MEMBER SWORN.

John Fletcher Moulton, esquire, Q.C., for Hackney (Southern Division.)

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. BARTON (Armagh, Mid) said, he had ventured to take part in the Debate because he happened to have special means of information with reference to one part of the Budget, inasmuch as he was a member of the Board of the principal brewery in Ireland. He did not wish to speak on behalf of any particular concern, however, nor unduly to press the claims of any interest in which he was concerned, but he thought that there were certain matters which deserved to be brought before the House. As, however, he did not intend to vote solely upon the Beer Duties, and as he thought the Bill was very unfair to Ireland in other respects, he would like to say a few words about the Death Duties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the burden of the Death Duties which would be levied in Ireland would be less than that of the duties levied in England. He had no means of ascertaining whether this were so or not, but if it were so it was because there were fewer large landowners and wealthy people in Ireland. He need not say that every observation which his hon. Friend had made with reference to English landowners applied to Irish landowners, and that when an Irish estate was burdened with an additional tax, as it would be under this Bill for several years after each succession, not only would the landlord be burdened, but the tenants and labourers would be indirectly affected. He would remind the House that the Irish landlords were not receiving any special compensatory rebate such as the English landowners were to receive by the reduction of and the alteration in the Income Tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was tempering the wind to the shorn lamb in England, although in Ireland, where the lamb had certainly been shorn, the wind was not to be tempered. He would give some examples to show that the tenants would be more heavily burdened under this Bill than they were at present. There were certain tenants who held by freehold tenures. Many tenants held under fee-farm grants, and there were others who held on leases for one, two, or three lives. The last-named cases were very frequent in Ireland amongst what he might call the middle-sized farmers, and in these cases the increased rate of valuation would result in imposing an increased burden upon the farmers.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman state what is the average rental in these cases?

MR. BARTON said, he could not at the moment state what the average was, but he would take care to find out as far as he could and inform the right hon. Gentleman. Certainly farms of 150 or 160 acres were frequently let for three lives. One reason was that it was considered better than police protection. Landowners were not likely to be shot when the leases of the country depended upon their existence. There was a little provision at the end of Clause 13 which was of some importance to the tenants of Ireland, though he was afraid it had escaped their attention. It would repeal a provision in the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1881 in favour of small estates not exceeding £300 in value. Since 1881 these estates had only paid a fixed duty of 30s., or half per cent. It was a great boon, but the present proposal of the Government would repeal it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would give estates under £1,000 value a certain advantage, but the duty would be doubled in the case of the small estates to which he referred. It would be £3 instead of 30s. In Ireland there were a large number of small estates of the value of £250 or £300 held by small farmers and shopkeepers, and these people would strongly object to the increased imposition. Another point was as to the tenant purchasers under the Ashbourne Acts. It was not easy to state what would be the effect of the Bill upon such purchasers. None but practising solicitors could know how a duty would work, but he had tried to ascertain the facts, from the best solicitors in Ireland, what would be the effect, and as a result he believed that the Bill would impose a distinct additional burden on these purchasers. The estates were freehold, but descended on a death as personalty. They paid Succession Duty. In future the duty would be calculated on the actual value, while hitherto it had been calculated at a lower rate. He did not say that this was wrong, but he thought it should be understood by every tenant purchaser in Ireland that he would equally with the landowner have an additional burden to bear. He regretted that this Bill would hamper the operation of the Purchase Acts, which most people wanted to see working smoothly and well. But he would now pass on to the question of the Beer and Spirit Duties, which was a far more serious matter for Ireland. The opposition in Ireland would be based not on moral, but rather on fiscal grounds. There were many amongst his constituents who took a strong view with reference to temperance legislation, and he found himself so much in sympathy with them that though he was a Director in a large brewery he was in favour of Sunday closing, and, to some extent, a heretic amongst the English brewers. But whilst there were Members of that House from Ireland who held that view, nevertheless they felt that the burden upon spirits, which were so largely consumed and manufactured in Ireland compared with the rest of the Kingdom, was a serious matter, and, if made excessive, would become a national calamity. The general opinion in Ireland was that the proposed extra tax of 6d was an excessive burden. They had so very few remaining industries in Ireland that they could not regard except with alarm any additional fiscal burdens upon them. And there was another danger—a moral and social one—namely, that of illicit distillation. In 1890 the present Secretary of State for India, when the House was induced to accept the 6d. per gallon on spirits, said that all the evidence went to show that there was a certain high-water mark beyond which an increase of duties produced illicit distillation, and the Revenue suffered. He then saw that high-water mark, but what did they think of the springtide proposal of this year? He could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman would find it difficult to reconcile his position now with what he said in 1890, and there was also the point of the injury to the people to be regarded. It was these poisonous decoctions which ruined health and led people into crime; yet this was what the Government, at any rate, were lending encouragement to. In 1880 Mr. Childers proposed an additional tax of 1s. on spirits, and the Government was defeated. In 1890, however, 6d. was put on, and in 1894 they were proposing to add another 6d.—or, in effect, to complete the very shilling extra tax over which the Government of 1880 was defeated. It was no satisfaction to the spirit trade in Ireland that the cherry had to be eaten in two bites, or to receive in instalments that which was refused by Parliament as a whole. Then, with reference to the supposed concession of the imposition of the tax for only a year or 14 months, he thanked the hon. Member for North Kerry (Mr. Sexton) for having drawn attention to the matter, but he must declare that it was absolutely worthless. In 1890 an Amendment was proposed to the Budget limiting Mr. Goschen's tax of 6d. to one year, but in that Debate the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then in Opposition—and he would commend this to the Irish Members—declared that

> "The House of Commons may save the tax for one year, but the Inland Revenue will go on, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will say I am entitled to compensation, and that compensation will be the continuance of the tax for ever."

And he was not the only authority. Mr. Childers in 1885 was asked to place the Beer and Spirit Duties for one year, and he said he could do so in respect of beer, but not of spirits, because in the latter case it could not be done without throwing the trade and the revenue into a complete state of disorganisation. He did not know if anything could be shown to have happened in the trade and in the Revenue Department since that time to alter the condition of things then alluded to. He had read an amusing speech of an Irish gentleman connected with the trade at an indignation meeting in Ireland, in which he said that a Spirit Duty in the Budget was like a lost spirit in the hot quarter of another world—when once it got there, there was no escape. He earnestly hoped if this duty were imposed it would not be made permanent, but he was afraid that the assurance given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was of no value. He would say a word with reference to the Beer Duties. About one-twelfth of the beer of the United Kingdom was made and consumed in Ireland, and the effect of the tax in Ireland would be especially serious, where the process of brewing was more expensive than in England, especially amongst the smaller brewers. A reference to the published Returns would show that there was a larger proportion of barley and malt used in Ireland than in England. While in England 1 cwt. of sugar was used to between 20 and 30 bushels of barley, in Ireland it was one to 330 bushels, or, in other words, 15 times as much barley and malt were used in Ireland as in England. He did not say that as showing that the Irish breweries were superior, because he admitted that the matter was governed largely by public taste. But the effect of the tax upon the smaller breweries, from their having to do their work with these more expensive materials, would be very hard indeed. With reference to the firm of Messrs. Guinness and Sons, with which he was connected, he at once said that their's was an exceptional case, and that they could not argue from the particular case of that brewery to the general case of the breweries in the country, and least of all in Ireland. It would not be becoming in him to enlarge upon the subject of that firm, but from what had been said by others, and from what was known in the trade, he did declare that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to use the facts connected with that single firm they would be entirely misleading and most unfair to the other members of the trade. He must, however, put one or two facts with reference to that firm before the House. The right hon.

Gentleman said that this tax was imposed deliberately on the brewers. He would not discuss there whether the tax would or would not come out of their pockets. Such things as those had to be decided in another place than the House of Commons. But taking the assumption of the right hon. Gentleman, who were the brewers in a concern like Messrs. Guinness ? They were no longer one or two rich men. The ordinary shareholders numbered 4,700, and of those nine-tenths of them only got between 4 and 5 per cent. on the price which they paid for their shares. [*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] Yes ; but the right hon. Gentleman was taxing these persons, and not those who made their money years ago. The amount of the tax on the Company's stock he calculated would be £43,000 a year, and this would amount to something like one and three-fourths of the present dividend of the ordinary shareholders, or, in other words, it would amount to between one-eighth and one-tenth of the total income they got on their shares. That meant that those persons would have to pay a 2s. Income Tax upon the dividend they received on their shares. But he would remind the House that those persons were already Income Tax payers. He had heard it said, " Why don't you tax wines—the drinks of the rich ? Why do you go to beer and spirits ? " The answer given was, " Because the wine drinkers were Income Tax payers, and Chancellors of the Exchequer wanted to tax a different class of persons." But in the present case the Government were doing the reverse—putting an additional tax on the Income Tax payers. He would go further than that, and remark that it was not true to say that these shareholders were rich people. In hundreds of cases the firm with which he was connected had applications for certificates for the payment of Income Tax in order that those shareholders might claim a rebate or total exemption. That showed that while the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave a rebate upon the said Income Tax with one hand, with the other hand he was taking a 2s. Income Tax out of the same pockets. There was one way in which the large brewers had a melancholy prospect of recouping themselves, and that was by the ruin of the smaller traders in the brewing interests. He had had information given him from other brewers in Ireland with reference to the effect of the tax upon them. He would take the case of a substantial brewery there, in which the duty would be £2,000 a year, and he was assured that that £2,000 would represent 43 per cent. of the annual profits of the last three years. Similarly in another case he was informed that the tax would amount to £1,500, and that the whole profits were only £3,000, and the tax would amount to 50 per cent., and in another case, where the tax would be £1,200 and the profits were £3,000, the tax would swallow 40 per cent. He declared that the Government had no right by taxation to reduce the profits of people by the single addition of an impost so large as this. But the case was worse even than what he had stated. He was assured by those in the trade that small brewers must be ruined by this tax, because it would just take away the margin of their profit. The imposition of similar taxes in 1880 and 1889 directly caused the ruin of many breweries. In 1880 there were 23,000 brewers in the Kingdom ; in 1889 they had fallen to 12,000, and it was matter of common knowledge that the greater number of these failures were due to the additional tax imposed in 1880. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer did temper the wind to the small brewer, because he imposed his tax in a manner so as to operate less hardly by altering the gravity of the beer ; but since that time 2,500 brewers had disappeared, and the question he would put was this : If a 3d. tax in four years ruined 2,500 brewers, how long would it take for a 6d. tax to ruin the rest ? Had the Chancellor of the Exchequer any right to relieve the small Income Tax payers by means of a tax which was likely to bring ruin upon others ? They were all glad that the rebate should be given, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had selected a year with an extraordinary deficit to give this relief, and the fact was he had tried to do too much in his Budget. It were better that he had been just rather than generous. Of course the tax would operate to the benefit of large firms, who, however, would not thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because they would contemplate with greater regret on strictly business grounds the loss which it would inflict on many people and a great many classes, and because it would not be a satisfactory thing that a few large monopolists here and there should become the central tax gatherers of the Exchequer. It was said that it did not matter to the farmer whether he sold his barley to the big man or the small if the productions of the country were kept up. But that was not the case. Let them look at the fall in the acreage of barley. In 1880 the acreage of barley reached its highest point, being 2,695,000 acres. That was the time when Mr. Gladstone altered the tax and placed it on beer, and the result was that the acreage fell year by year. It recovered itself somewhat in 1889, and then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's (Mr. Goschen) imposed his homœopathic dose, and immediately again the acreage of barley fell, and the position of affairs now was that the acreage of barley in 1893 was 60,000 less than in 1889, and 440,000 less than it was in 1880. Who could doubt that it was in consequence of these taxes that this great and sudden fall had occurred? And in proportion as the acreage of barley went down so the consumption of sugar went up, to the advantage of the foreign producer both of that commodity and of barley. What was the good of Labour Commissions, of attempts to get people back from the towns to villages, and of other efforts in that direction, however laudable, when all the time they were pursuing a sure and certain process of gradually driving the people into the towns and increasing the pauperism and the very dangers they deplored. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would find his Budget was very ingenious but also very injurious. The right hon. Gentleman thought it was popular, but its popularity did not extend beyond St. George's Channel, and he doubted from what occurred last night whether it extended beyond the Thames even. He made no complaint with reference to the particular business his connection with which led him to study the particular subject. If any business in the brewing trade could stand the extra taxation that business could, and possibly though it would suffer immediately it might gain in the end by the miserable results and losses of others. But he said that in this and other respects the Budget would have a most injurious effect on the country, and, as would always happen when a Chancellor of the Exchequer in trying to injure the rich unfairly aimed at the rich man, so before the shot reached its destination it scattered and struck many of the others.

*SIR J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, that he would not follow the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken into the mysteries of the spirit and beer trades; but with regard to what the hon. and learned Member had said as to the small brewers, it should be borne in mind that the large brewers had been buying up the smaller public-houses and breweries for many years, and that the country was actually suffering from the increase of tied houses. Just as they had bought up the small public-houses because they found it to their interest to control the trade as much as possible, they would buy up the small breweries. It was by no means, therefore, to be inferred that any action which they might take in this respect would necessarily be the outcome of the financial policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which policy, according to the hon. and learned Member, was calculated to be oppressive, more especially to the small brewers. The logic of the hon. and learned Member was indeed rather curious. He said that a large brewery in which he was interested had a large number of small shareholders who had bought in at a premium and only got an ordinary rate of interest, and were therefore likely to suffer greatly by any increase of the Beer Duty, which diminished the profits of the trade. But, on the other hand, he pointed out that the small competing breweries might be extinguished—a result which, if it were brought about, could only benefit the shareholders of the large breweries, as to whose interests the hon. and learned Member was so much concerned. An hon. Member who spoke the previous night said he was very much surprised at the slackness of the attendance on the Government side of the House during this Debate. It was true there had been comparatively few upon those Benches during the Budget Debate, and he would state the reason. Some of them were under the impression that the matter had been so thoroughly threshed out in Debate upon the Resolutions that it would require little or no more Debate. On Saturday, the organs of the Party opposite told them the Budget Bill would pass through its Second Reading probably without a Division; hon. Gentlemen who objected to many of its provisions reserving themselves, of course, for the opportunity of dealing in Committee with the different points in the Bill which they thought required attention. But his hon. Friend the Member for Thirsk and the hon. Member for Wimbledon thought otherwise, and they were thus engaged in the midst of a Budget Debate, and were discussing the various sides of the question. On the general situation he wished to say that he looked upon this Debate as entirely originated by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition Benches. It really arose out of the Army and Navy requirements, which they put forward so zealously a few months ago. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) pressed the matter so much that he even took one of those exceptional opportunities with which they were beginning to be familiar of moving the adjournment of the House in order that he might discuss the question as of urgent public importance. It was the noble Lord and his friends who urged on the Government the expenditure which had since appeared in the Government proposals with regard to the Navy. He quite agreed in the view that the Navy scares had led to an unnecessary expenditure of the public money in the past, and this opinion was very much fortified by the late disclosures as to the extent of the defalcations in stores and materials that were actually being found to exist in the French dockyards. At the present time, however, they were not discussing the policy of the Estimates, which had been agreed to. They had now simply to consider how they could find this additional money for the Army and Navy, a sum of £3,500,000 in round numbers more than last year. The hon. Member for Thirsk disapproved of the methods which the Government proposed, especially as regarded the Death Duties. He told them, at the end of an excellent and well-reasoned speech, that the argument in favour of the proposals would be we must look at the Budget as a whole. No doubt they should look at it as a whole. The experience of life was that this was a course which it was often necessary to adopt, and in adopting it they usually found that they had to compromise more or less between various and conflicting interests, which was just what the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done in this case. The Budget generally was a matter of compromise, and the hon. Gentlemen who were disposed to criticise its details with some severity ought to bear this in mind. The Sinking Fund might be referred to as a matter in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been attacked. His right hon. Friend had been attacked because he had not adhered to the financial purity which he at one time advocated. He (Sir J. Pease) had, however, never been much in favour of a Sinking Fund. It seemed to him to have great drawbacks to the existing generation. In his grandfather's time they accumulated large debts; in his father's time they did little to pay them off; but in his own time and his son's time it looked as if they were getting the debt largely discharged—a debt of the past. His grandchildren might find that they had very little to do with the National Debt. That was not quite as it should be. One result was that when current expenditure came upon them in large amounts the Sinking Fund always stood in the way. In his opinion, it would be better to confine their efforts for the reduction of the Debt to the application of the surpluses of the Revenue in good years instead of making the present generation pay so largely for the expenditure of the past. The Member for the Wimbledon Division (Mr. Bonsor) in his speech tried very hard to prove that the extra 6d. a barrel on beer and the extra duty on spirits would damage the British farmer in arresting the growth of barley, but turning to these statistics with which Members were pretty well familiar, he found the sales of barley during the last few years were shown. In 1876 we received 2,700,000 quarters of foreign barley in this country, and an interesting column of statistics showed that the amount of home-grown barley sold in the various local markets was 1,800,000 quarters. The brewing interest, it might be supposed, used this home-grown barley, and of the total amount of barley in that year the percentage was 59·87 foreign and 40·13 English. Then, without giving the intervening years, it was found that the total in 1881 was 8,145,000 quarters, and in 1892 7,500,000 quarters. The receipts to the Exchequer from the Beer Duty rose £139,000 in the last financial year more than the Estimate, and £91,000 more than the year before.

MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) (interrupting) said, he thought the hon. Gentleman's figures were wrong. There were 60,000,000 bushels of malted barley used in 1876, which would be something over 7,000,000 quarters.

SIR J. PEASE said, he took the figures of barley as they appeared in the Official Returns, but he did not use any Returns as to malt. The figure showed an increase of the consumption of barley from 4,500,000 quarters in 1876 to 7,500,000 quarters in 1892.

MR. BONSOR said, he was quite certain the hon. Baronet was misinformed. There was an annual Return called the Brewers' Return, which went out every year, and he would find that in 1876 the consumption of barley malt was as he had said, and that in the last year it had fallen to 55,000,000 bushels.

SIR J. PEASE said, he was not speaking of malted barley, but of barley, to which reference had been made.

MR. BONSOR: For use in brewing.

SIR J. PEASE said, the question at issue was, had the Beer Duty done harm to barley growing in this country, and would it do harm? Out of the whole stock of barley sold in the markets and imported in 1876, the proportion of imported barley was as 60 to 40, and now the percentage was more nearly equal than it was then. Therefore, this duty Chancellors of the Exchequer had laid upon beer had had no effect on British agriculture, or on the quantity of barley brought into the market or sold, although the acreage of barley had decreased. It had decreased, unfortunately, in its use as a feeding stuff, though such a desirable food, and especially in dairy farms. The hon. Member for Wimbledon, in his speech, tried to prove a little too much, because the figures showed that, whilst malted barley had gone down from 45s. 6d. to 28s. 10d. in price between 1886 and 1893, or 34 per cent., beer had only been reduced 10 per cent. And yet they had this great cry from the brewing interest in respect of these duties, notwithstanding the fact that whilst they paid 34 per cent. less for the price of material they had only lowered the price of beer by 10 per cent. Whilst it was perfectly true that the large brewers had increased, and the small brewers had gone down; the large brewers had machinery and facilities for brewing against which small brewers could not stand, and he submitted that the brewers were well able to meet any difficulty without adding a single fraction to the price of what was called the poor man's beer. There was another point in reference to these duties, as to which he should like to say one or two words. It had been stated two or three times in the course of the Debate that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian abolished the Malt Tax and laid a tax upon beer. Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman did that at the earnest instigation of the agricultural interest, who urged it time after time. He dared say many hon. Members sitting around him would recollect when this matter was regularly brought forward by Mr. William Morritt, a distinguished Conservative Member of the House, who on one occasion counted himself out on this very Motion by ironically calling Mr. Speaker's attention to the number of Members present interested in the subject. It was certainly at the instigation of the agricultural interest that the right hon. Member for Midlothian laid the duty on beer and took the tax off the material used in manufacture. He was surprised that in all the speeches which they had heard in criticism of the Budget from the Opposition Benches not a word had been said in gratitude to the Government for the relief which was given to so many of the constituents of hon. Members in connection with the Income Tax. He had had great experience of the clerks in their great railways and manufacturing concerns, and was convinced that the new arrangements by which the Income Tax was fixed at a higher limit would be to them a great boon—indeed, he felt that if hon. Gentlemen only would look at this Budget as a whole they would find that it would be to a large part of the community a real and important service. The abatement under Schedule B would be much appreciated by the agricultural interest. That affected a very large class of tenants in the Midland and Northern Counties, where the rents were not high, and the benefit of the abatement would therefore be enjoyed. In connection with this part of the Budget much had been said about the difficulties which the landed interest had in these days to encounter. He admitted the difficulties of the landed interest owing to the constant diminution of rent, the number of repairs, and the amount of drainage that had to be done to keep tenants comfortable in their holdings, the roofing-in of fold-yards, &c., which had to be done by the landlord on a decreased rental. But other trades had been quite as equally depressed which got no allowance of this kind whatever, and it was a most difficult thing to have any Income Tax on an equitable, fair general basis. In regard to the trade which he represented in his own district and which he knew something of—mining—there was no deduction from the Income Tax for the amount of the colliery owners' expenditure which had to be written off yearly, because in sinking a mine a large amount of capital must go in the same ratio as the minerals were estimated. The Income Tax assessors, however, allowed them no return for that, although it was reduction from income which had to be made from time to time; therefore, while he did not begrudge in the slightest degree to the agricultural interest the 10 per cent. proposed to be taken off the assessable value of the Income Tax for the rent of the land, surely it was a boon to them not given to other people—the professional man, for instance—and which other taxpayers had, of course, to meet. He defended the graduated Death Duties, contending that the principle of the equal taxation of all property at death was right. There were, he admitted, difficulties in ascertaining the value, and the clauses relating to the question of valuation would have to be carefully considered, and it might be found necessary to insert words in the Bill laying down clearly on what principles the valuation ought to be conducted. In the levying of taxes it was a material point that they should, if possible, be levied in a way which added the least to the irritation of paying them. He wished to say a few words with regard to the general principle of the Bill. The principle was, to his mind, clear and right that whatever might be the property of a man, or however it might be invested, it was liable to a charge for the benefit of the State. He had always advocated the proper adjustment of local burdens. The only reason for giving the agricultural interest, or the landed interest, the privileges which it had enjoyed in the past, was the idea that it had to bear a share of the annual taxation of the State more than what was just or equitable; but the late Chancellor of the Exchequer and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had done what they could by local grants to equalise the burden. He thought the landed interest had a right to be placed on an equality as to the Death Duties with personalty; and to claim that the burdens should be equal burdens as between personalty and realty. No one had ever denied that proposition, but he thought that when realty and personalty were put on the same line and level it would be more possible to arrive at a better adjustment of other burdens.

*MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had stated that the Budget was the penalty which had been placed upon the patriotism of the Opposition in urging the demands of the Army and Navy on the consideration of the House. But he thought that the hon. Members who had called attention to the needs of the Army and Navy would not complain if they had to suffer some additional burden, so long as other interests suffered equally with them. He found himself in sympathy with the Irish grievance which had been brought forward by the hon. and learned Member for Mid-Armagh in connection with the imposition of increased taxation on whisky. In Scotland, as well as in Ireland, they manufactured whisky and drank whisky, and the additional tax was considered by all classes—whether the producers of the whisky or the humble consumer of an occasional glass—as an injustice imposed upon them. Some time ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer had kindly promised that he would grant a public inquiry into the financial relations of Scotland with the other portions of the United Kingdom; but the right hon. Gentleman, with some considerable prudence, had delayed giving that inquiry, for it would have shown the great hardship in the matter of taxation imposed on Scotland and Ireland, who, in this instance, might very well join hands together in laying their case before the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The population of Scotland, according to the last Return, was 4,250,000; the population of England was 29,000,000. Scotland, therefore, had only one-seventh of the population of England. But Scotland paid not one-seventh, but one-third, of the Spirit Duty, for while England contributed about £9,937,000, Scotland contributed £3,313,000, and Ireland £2,113,000. Therefore, the burden borne by Scotland in the shape of a duty on whisky was in an unfair proportion to the burden on alcoholic spirit drunk in England, especially as they took this alcohol in strict moderation in Scotland, though they drank whisky. The consumption of alcohol was less per head in Scotland than in England, and everyone knew that whisky was a better drink than beer, and was constantly preferred to beer by Members of the House. He thought "the predominant partner," of whom they had heard so much lately, should allow the junior partner to have the books inquired into, to see whether the predominant partner took the lion's share of the products of the taxation of the country. Taking the alcoholic strength as the basis of taxation, he would point out that if an Englishman drank a gallon of beer he only paid a tax of 2½d.; but if a group of Scotchmen consumed the same quantity of whisky and water, with the same strength of proof spirit as the beer, they paid 1s. 1¼d., which was most unjust treatment. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to raise £760,000 additional from whisky, and as an unfair proportion of the tax would fall on Scotland, he maintained that he had a substantial grievance to lay before the House, and that it was one that should receive attention. It was quite obvious that in the circumstances the quality of the whisky would suffer. There would either be more water or the ingredients would be of an inferior character, and of the two alternatives the water was the least objectionable. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should at least grant Scotland the inquiry asked for; and if the contention that Scotland paid too much were proved true, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether the excess which Scotland paid in duty in proportion to England should not be paid back to her in ways that would benefit the country. In the Western Counties of Scotland the agricultural industry was in a very depressed condition indeed; and if by means of this money light railways were provided there, as in Ireland, and the country opened up, the industry would be greatly benefited. Again, the fisheries were languishing for a little money to help them forward; and the expenditure on them of a few thousand pounds would enormously develop them. He therefore hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take the whole case of Scotland into consideration, and if the right hon. Gentleman found the country was unjustly taxed by the Spirit Duty that he would repay it back again to Scotland in grants for the development of her resources.

*Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): The hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division seems to be of opinion that hon. Members whose seats are on this side of the House are responsible for the deficit of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Baronet was preceded in that argument yesterday by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Woodbridge Division, who stated he was glad that the additional taxation incurred at the call of the classes was going to be placed upon the right shoulders. I noticed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer began to cheer that statement, but immediately stopped when he discovered that it was received with hearty cheers by Members on this side of the House.

Sir W. HARCOURT: You are mistaken. I did not cheer him.

*Mr. GOSCHEN: But, however that may be, when the hon. Member for Woodbridge stated that we on this side of the House are responsible, I wondered how it was that no protest was raised by hon. Members opposite when the expenditure was incurred for which the bills are now coming in? We see now that, in the opinion of trusted Members of the Party opposite, this expenditure was forced on the Government, not by any desire of Lord Spencer nor by any of the Naval Lords, nor by any of the exigencies of the country, but by the criminalities of the classes, on this side of the House.

We were a little doubtful, I must confess, before that statement was made, as to the quarter from which the pressure on the Government came. We should not claim the credit, except it is forced on us by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I do not propose to traverse the same ground which I covered the other day when the Resolutions were being discussed in Committee, with two important exceptions. I pass over the question of the seizure of part of the money applicable to the discharge of Debt last year for the purpose of applying it to meet Expenditure in this. I dismiss the question of the suspension of the Sinking Fund, and its application to other purposes than those for which it was intended. I dismiss the question of the repeal of the Act by which the dividends on the Suez Canal shares are appropriated to the payment of the Debt and their application to meet the Expenditure of this year. I will not specially dwell upon the question which others have dealt with at considerable length —namely, the question of the Beer and Spirit Duties, except to note with satisfaction that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has extended the date from the 31st of March to the 1st of July. It is, however, a little odd that this most scientific and brilliant Budget was on the eve of tumbling to pieces at the first touch, and that the right hon. Gentleman forgot the elementary rule that when a tax is proposed to end at the termination of the financial year, a portion of the proceeds of that tax is likely to slip through his hands. It reminds one of a great scientific gun, splendidly equipped, which has the misfortune to jamb at its first trial owing to the awkward handling of the gunner in charge. The right hon. Gentleman was rescued from that position by the advice which he received from this side of the House. But I will pass to two points which I wish to discuss to-night, though I touched them on the last occasion—namely, the question of exemptions and the question of graduation. With regard to graduation, I think hon. Members, whether they agree with graduation or not, are of opinion that it is a new departure, and marks a new era in finance, for good or for evil. That, I think, will be felt by hon. Members on both sides of the House. The right hon. Gentleman sought to fasten upon me that, in speaking against graduation, I was pledging the Conservative Party. I had no such intention. While I have myself strong opinions on the subject, I am aware that they are not shared by all who sit on this side of the House. In fact, there are Members behind me who have stated a different opinion. But before I approach that subject let me say a word on the exemptions from Income Tax. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division said that hon. Members on this side of the House did not express sufficient gratitude to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for these exemptions, which he said must be of great importance to our constituents. The hon. Baronet, I thought, was a Gladstonian of the strictest school. I should have thought that he would be acquainted with the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian. He must be aware that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian has made on more than one occasion the strongest protest in this House against a system of exemptions of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman considered that such a policy as that now proposed is both dangerous and weakening to the efficiency of the Income Tax; and especially was the right hon. Gentleman opposed to it when in the same year in which an increase of taxation is put upon people by means of this very tax the Government smooth their way by making abatements at the lower end of the scale. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, who is considered to be a master of finance, warned the House against this policy; but these warnings are absolutely of no value, it appears, to some hon. Members opposite, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer scoffed at certain words which I quoted from a speech of his late Leader. Contrary, I believe, to the majority of this House, and possibly contrary to the majority on both sides of the House, I believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian was entirely right in the view he took, that if you grant these exemptions to any class—and certainly if any class deserve exemption it is the class you propose to exempt—it is not right, at the same time, to increase the tax on other people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that we have often before put on taxes in order to relieve taxation; but the peculiarity of this case is that you are not introducing fiscal reforms; what you are doing is to relieve one class of the pressure of a tax, while making it heavier on others.

SIR W. HARCOURT: It was done in 1876.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; and I spoke against it in 1876, and I speak against it now. The Leader of the Liberal Party spoke against it then, and I daresay the right hon. Gentleman himself was in the Division against it. I know that in the main the Liberal Party followed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian on that occasion, because he said that it was almost a claim of honour to vote against it. At any rate I hold that view, and I know it is not now a popular view. I have endeavoured, while Chancellor of the Exchequer, to help in every way to lighten the taxation on that very class of persons who, as I said, are entitled to sympathy. This sympathy I showed by reducing the Inhabited House Duty in their case. Therefore, it is not because of want of sympathy with that class that I hold this view. Further, I still hold very strongly the view, in which, I believe, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian were in his seat to-night, he would entirely agree with me, that a reckless resort to the Income Tax on every possible occasion, weakening at the same time its power by exemption, is a bad financial policy, for it weakens the credit and resources of the country for those great emergencies in which, as the past history of our country shows, the Income Tax has been such an immense engine for meeting immediate and pressing needs. With regard to the relief which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has given by levying the Income Tax on the net instead of on the gross, the hon. Baronet opposite has said that the right hon. Gentleman has not been sufficiently thanked for the concession. The position appears to me to be this: the right hon. Gentleman is like a man who takes 10s. from a certain number of people; then gives them back 5s., and expects them to be extremely grateful that he did not keep the entire 10s. When realty and personalty were put, as regards the Death Duty, on the same footing, the right hon. Gentleman was bound to make this concession. It was justice rather than generosity that actuated the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Much stress has been laid on this matter. The hon. Baronet said what a great boon it was. Let me give the House an example. Take the case of a man with £20,000 a year derived from rents. We will assume the Income Tax stands at the even figure of 6d. The Chancellor of the Exchequer allows him 10 per cent., or 2,000 sixpences, amounting to £50 a year. That is the boon—£50 a year, or, with the Income Tax at 8d., £60 a year. That is all a man in receipt of rents amounting to £20,000 a year will receive at the hands of the generous Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the other hand, if you capitalise this £20,000 a year at 25 years' purchase, you get £500,000. Seven per cent. on that sum is £35,000. Under the present system he may have paid £15,000, so that the balance is £20,000, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken from him, and in return he gives him a little annuity of £50 a year. If that sum is applied to other cases it will be seen how great is the value of the boon. With regard to the Death Duties as a whole, I am aware that in certain quarters of the House there are many Members who are desirous to have these duties placed on a similar footing, and to equalise the weight of taxation on personalty and realty, if it could be so arranged as to combine with it all the safeguards necessary to prevent any of those injustices continuing under which the landed proprietor or the occupier may be at the present time suffering. To bring about such a state of things would be, in my opinion, the most important object to which any Chancellor of the Exchequer could devote his ambition. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not succeeded, and I am not surprised that he has not succeeded, in reducing the Death Duties to one duty. He has been baffled by the difficulty of arranging the consanguinity scale. If you have one duty simply for estate and probate, you lose all the advantages of the consanguinity scale. On the other hand, I understand the right hon. Gentleman was not prepared to abolish probate and arrange all the duties upon a Succession Duty or a Legacy Duty basis. So far as I am concerned, I think it is an ingenious arrangement by which he divides the A duties and the B duties, and follows that up; but I am bound to say that, in following up that line, he has stumbled upon many difficulties which give rise to complications and which may threaten his scheme as a whole. There is one point not yet touched by anyone, and a question that arises under settled property. When a wife inherits —I will not say inherits—derives—from a husband, or a husband derives property from the wife, there is, at present, no charge payable to the State of any kind—the lawyers will correct me if I am wrong. In the case of a settlement of £10,000, if it was settled on the wife, and after her life on her husband, and after him on her children, if the wife dies, the husband takes the interest and pays nothing. Under the Bill he will pay 4 per cent. and 1 per cent. in order to clear the way for the remainder of the settlement. Therefore, you have a new principle to which I doubt whether the public would give its adhesion. Contrary to all precedent, you make the husband pay 5 per cent. as a minimum. I now pass to the question of graduation; and last night we were told by the Member for Bradford, without giving his authority, that all economists are now in favour of graduation. He did not produce a single authority for that. I think he might possibly have done so; but I thought that professors of certain financial doctrines were not to be heard upon this class of questions—at least, not by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When professional economists are quoted by bimetallists he rejects their views entirely as simply those of theorists; but when they come to deal with taxation, a subject of which, I presume, they know as much, but no more, than they know of bimetallism, then they are quoted with approval as giving the basis of authority and of action. I do not know many eminent authorities in favour of graduation; I know one, but I am not acquainted with others; and what I deny distinctly is that all the authorities, as the right hon. Gentleman said, are in favour of graduation. This is a question so important that, with the indulgence of the House, I will dwell on it for a few moments. I think hon. Gentlemen opposite will accept Sir Louis Mallet. He was a good Radical, the friend and associate of Mr. Cobden, and a great authority with the Party opposite.

SIR W. HARCOURT: An authority on bimetallism?

MR. GOSCHEN: I hope his bimetallism will not shake the confidence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his general views, otherwise the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have to give up all economists. Sir Louis Mallet may be taken as a Radical who sympathises with the old Manchester school. What does he say? He says—

> "The principle of progressive taxation, which has been a favourite idea with the schools of Continental Socialism, is one which it is impossible to discuss within the limits of this paper.
>
> "The question has been so thoroughly dealt with in past controversies that there is little new to be said about it. Even Mr. Mill, who favours some scheme of limiting inheritances, observes that such a tax as applied to incomes 'is a tax on industry and economy, and imposes a penalty on people for having worked harder and saved more than their neighbours. It is partial taxation, which is a mild form of robbery.'"

The House will remember that M. Thiers, quoted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London, spoke of this as "pillage." I do not know whether he was aware that the words used were almost the same words as those of Mr. Mill. Then Sir Louis Mallet says—

> "If the subject has not attracted much attention on the part of English economists, it is because fortunately this country has until lately enjoyed a comparative immunity from the economic heresies which have sometimes threatened the foundations of society on the Continent, but it is needless to say that the system in question is altogether at variance with the four rules of taxation laid down by Adam Smith."

"Economic heresies!" This is now the foundation-stone of the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Louis Mallet proceeds—

> "The aim of Governments should always be to encourage the motives which promote industry and economy, and there can be no more disastrous folly than to regard wealth as the commercial classes were regarded in the Middle Ages, merely as a fit subject for fiscal rapacity."

SIR W. HARCOURT: Did he refer to graduated Income Tax or Death Duties?

MR. GOSCHEN: It is with reference to "taxation on income or property." But look at the tone! It is the same as that frequently adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian. He never would be responsible for graduated taxation being submitted to the House. I do not wish to weary the House with regard to the special point of my personal dealing with this matter in 1889. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has charged me with being the originator of the system of graduated taxation. He said he was my faithful disciple, and that he sat at my feet. I am afraid that my pupil has been a bad pupil. He has forgotten half of what I taught, and he has distorted the remainder. He seems to have forgotten altogether the argument I used. It may be a bad one; but in my view, and in the view of those with whom I am acting, the imposition of the Estate Duty of 1 per cent. was based on the same principle as the exemption below a certain point in the Income Tax. I put that forward on the first day. The Chancellor of the Exchequer read a portion of my words, but he did not read them all. I argued over and over again that that was the substance of the proposal that I made. It was perfectly easy for the right hon. Gentleman with that rhetorical sagacity which characterises him to fasten on this point and say, "Now we have got the basis of graduation." Others did so. But I repudiate the idea that I am responsible for this doctrine, which I repudiated at the very time that he was sitting at my feet. After all, it is a small matter whether I am responsible or not. I ask the House, do they believe that the matter would be left alone by the Chancellor of the Exchequer now if I had not acted in the way I did act in 1889? His proposal would have been made just the same. When the right hon. Gentleman attacked me he intended to strike at the Conservative Party through me. That seemed to me to be the object. I was responsible in the late Government, but the shafts of the right hon. Gentleman must lodge in me, and I protest against their reaching the Conservative Party behind me. I wish to maintain my own responsibility, and I cannot permit that any views of my own, some of which I may have inherited from the great Leader under whom both the right hon. Gentleman and myself have served, should be used in any manner to damage the Party with whom I am now acting. Now, with regard to the authorities of the right hon. Gentleman. He has quoted some of them. He has quoted the Australian Colonies, and for the first time we have a British Cabinet Minister coming down to this House and quoting the example of the Colonies as a good precedent for Imperial finance. We have not been accustomed to such treatment from the great Leader whom the right hon. Gentleman succeeds. He and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford say that this policy has succeeded in the Colonies. But there is no evidence before us that they have succeeded. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not argued this question yet with us. He made a few somewhat gibing remarks in reply to me, but he did not grapple with the question, and this is the point with which he ought to grapple. When you once embark on this system of graduation there are no stages, no landmarks, nothing whatever to guide you. There is no principle of justice—no principle where you can say you ought to stop; no principle of prudence—no principle whatever. What is the answer to that? It is because there is an absence of any landmarks and any standard that the Continental Socialists have hitherto favoured the system. I pay Socialistic literature on this subject, of which there is a good deal, the compliment of reading it; I think it ought to be read; people ought to know and appreciate more than they do the aims of some very capable literary men who are guiding the Socialist movement. And what is one of the main doctrines by which by peaceful means they think they may secure for a certain portion of the population a greater share of the wealth and property of the nation? It is by means of graduated Death Duties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might have quoted the essays of the Fabian Society as expressing the views of the economists who are in favour of these measures. Perhaps it was to some of these the hon. Member for Bradford referred. They recommend two forms of action—the graduation of Death Duties and a graduated Income Tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and his colleagues may be absolutely free from any design upon property; but, as I ventured to say the other day, they would provide the machinery for not only a mild form but a strong form of fiscal robbery. There are persons who have a creed of their own as to how they will bring about a redistribution of capital; and it is to them that the scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be most satisfactory. I must guard myself against a possible misrepresentation which is certain to follow. I am afraid no amount of explanation or protestation will prevent it. In what I am saying I am not guided by any special regard for capital or the rights of wealth or property; I am looking at the matter simply from the point of view of national interest. We cannot realise what would be the condition of the country without large accumulations of capital in the ordinary forms of business. It would be a disaster that capital in those forms should be dispersed. I declare in the strongest possible manner that I am not guided by what might be called the class interests of the rich, but I am doing my duty to the best of my ability in placing before the House what I conceive to be the dangers of the new departure. It is not only in the capacity of a representative of the class interests that I am opposed to graduation, or rather to the particular form of it which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has introduced; but it is rather as an ally of his, as an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, who wishes to see that if a tax is imposed that tax shall realise what it ought to realise—as a joint custodian with him of the Public Purse—that I am anxious to show that the plan proposed will not realise what is expected. I protest against these enormously high duties—and 8 per cent. is a very high duty—because they will frustrate the object aimed at. It is bad finance to set any tax so high that everybody sets about thinking how to evade it. In indirect taxation high duties lead to smuggling and to diminished returns; and I believe that in the same way these high duties imposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer may possibly break in his hands. I have already told the House that when at the Treasury I was warned by experts of the danger of unduly raising the Death Duties. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has been similarly warned; but I do wish we had some further knowledge with regard to the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We know the cases in which the additional taxation will be enormous, and yet the estimate of the total increase appears to be small. The right hon. Gentleman says the addition will realise £400,000. That is an extremely small sum, and it is a great disadvantage to us that we should have no means of checking his figures. We have not only to look at totals, but we have to illustrate the scheme by individual cases. My point is that the duties are so high that the object in imposing them will be defeated. Take a man who has personal property worth £250,000—or, say, £251,000. Suppose that he is not near death, but well on in life. At present the estate would pay in Death Duties £10,400, which by this Bill would be raised to £17,500. I am speaking not of realty, but of personalty, which has not had very much attention in the course of this Debate. Suppose he has four children—grown-up men and women—and to them he gives during his life £26,000 apiece. The estate would then be so reduced that he would pay £9,000 under the new system instead of £10,400 under the old. What I am afraid of is that these enormously high rates will set people at work to see how they can escape paying them, and that even the amounts raised by the present low rates will not be realised. Let us look the question fairly in the face. Here, in the case of personalty, we have conflicting motives—the motive of accumulation, the longing for parental control, the preference for personal expenditure; and we have, on the other hand, the feeling that these duties are so high that when you can trust your children you may as well partially evade the duties by giving them a portion of their inheritance in your lifetime.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear!

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman is cheering, not as Chancellor of the Exchequer, but as a social reformer; he cheers the evasion of the duty for the sake of social advantage. He is repudiating his ally. But I am speaking as an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is anxious not to see the duties evaded, and I say that if you once set people about seeing how these high duties may be evaded you do not know how far you may make an inroad on the Death Duties from which you derive so much benefit. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to finance for the Exchequer and not for social reform. I am not at all sure that, even from the point of view of social reform, the dispersion of capital is always a blessing. How has this Metropolis managed to secure its permanent position as the banking centre of the world? How has it secured the position which acts and reacts in thousands of ways, attracting commerce and shipping and giving employment to tens of thousands of people? It is, to a great extent, because here there have been large accumulations of capital; and I am not at all sure that the dispersion of capital would tend to social and national advantage in the way some hon. Members seem to think it would. Another mode of evading the duty may be mentioned. Where a man has two estates he may give the smaller one to the second son, or in the prospect of death he may give money to the second son. That may commend itself to those who approve of ruining the eldest son as the residuary legatee and prematurely endowing the second son. But will it be said this is not likely to be done? That leads me to the point of what is called equality of sacrifice; that is, I believe, supposed to be the basis of graduated taxation. It is only aimed at in theory, and you may find it work great injustice in practice because you cannot find your equal sacrifice. Take two men, one worth £5,000 and another worth £10,000 a year; a levy of 10 per cent. may be a greater sacrifice to the latter than to the former, because the extent of the sacrifice depends upon circumstances. In one case there may be duties connected with the property, and in the other there may be no duties whatever. One man may live in chambers in the Albany and have no duties or outlay of any kind; another man may have a large family and may have to keep up his estate, to incur expenditure, and to discharge duties. Equality of sacrifice will not find correspondence in the geometrical progression of taxation. You have attempted an impossibility if you attempt to reach what is real equality of sacrifice. There are many men in the Provinces and elsewhere who lead quiet lives, not spending more than £1,000 or £2,000 a year, while they are in receipt of £10,000 or £20,000, and what do they toil and sacrifice themselves for? They work to leave fortunes to their children, or to keep capital in their business. Is it not highly probable that if you are going to tax them on the very heavy scale proposed —8 per cent.—that they will contrive some way of avoiding such large contributions to the coffers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? In considering this possibility of evasion, or, as I should rather prefer to call it, avoidance, we must remember one of the great distinctions between realty and personalty. Personalty can be transferred by a simple visit to a banker, or by handing over a bundle of securities. Landed property, on the other hand, lies exposed to the tender mercies of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In that respect it is certainly worse situated, because, whatever hon. Members opposite may say, it is frequently impossible to sell it, to divide it, or even to value it. Under all these circumstances, landed property is worse situated for the purposes of premature disposal than other property. Therefore, those high duties, which may be avoided to a certain extent in the case of personalty, will fall heavier upon realty. The right hon. Gentleman rather congratulated the landed interest that the proposed tax was only 8 per cent., and not 10 per cent., as in Australia. This is an Australian Budget. The landed interest, now ruined by Australian mutton, is to be wiped out by Australian finance. We have heard a great deal during the course of this Debate about the respective burdens on personalty and on realty, and here I come to a matter of issue with right hon. Gentlemen who sit beside me. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India has for a long time attempted to climb on my shoulders into the impoverished treasure chambers of the agricultural interest, but he must bear in mind that the situation has changed indeed since 1871. I am afraid I am responsible in part with others for the phrase "hereditary burdens." I do not repudiate that view, though I know it is considered to be a frightful heresy by many right hon. Gentlemen who sit upon the Front Opposition Bench and many hon. Gentlemen behind me. But let me remind the House of some other considerations. Earlier in the century the landed interest was the senior partner and personalty was the junior partner. At that time personalty paid comparatively less than realty, and it was at that time that realty had its "hereditary burdens" placed upon it. Since that time the junior partner has been accumulating profits and money at such a rate that it has entirely distanced the senior partner, and is now in a position that it can more equitably bear a very considerable share of those local burdens which are placed almost exclusively upon realty. I do not know if hon. Members opposite would admit, even in theory, that personalty ought to be taxed to contribute to local burdens. For my part, I have always held that personalty may be made to contribute towards the burden of local taxation, and in the year 1888 I took a share of the Probate Duty and applied it in relief of local taxation, the Probate Duty being distinctly a tax which was borne by personalty. In opposition to the right hon. Gentleman, I hold that at present personalty is only paying 1½ per cent. Probate Duty to the Imperial Exchequer, the other 1½ per cent. going to the Local Authorities. The right hon. Member for Bradford last night gave some figures with regard to local taxation, and some figures that rather startled us with regard to certain Unions. Now, I asked across the Table at the time, "Has not the total amount of local rates in rural districts increased?" The right hon. Gentleman said, "I am coming to that presently;" but he never came to it at all. He confined himself to his particular Unions, and he chose—why I cannot conceive — Hatfield, Sleaford, Thirsk, Marlborough, and I know not what others. It seemed as if he wanted to make a kind of personal selection in this matter. I do not know whether he considered them average cases or not.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I mentioned certain other cases at the same time.

MR. GOSCHEN: All I can say is that they cannot have been average cases, because the amounts, if correctly stated by the right hon. Gentleman, and if all the rates were included—which was doubted on this side of the House—were very much below the average even of the counties in which they were situated. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman either selected some that were extremely low to illustrate his general proposition or he made a mistake in the method of his calculation. I give him the benefit of the doubt. The average rate in the £1 in the rural districts in all England is 2s. 3d. I think the right hon. Gentleman quoted one case where it was 1s. 3d. Now, this 2s. 3d. comes from the Report of the right hon. Gentleman who sits next to him (Mr. H. H. Fowler). If the right hon. Gentleman's is the average rate, why did the right hon. Gentleman——

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I said the 1s. 3d. came from Lancashire, and that is one of the few counties where the rates have not fallen. I selected that case on that account, and I shall be able to show the right hon. Gentleman what it is in respect of districts where the rates have not fallen.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, but I think it was rather an unfortunate selection to take that case when we were discussing the rural districts.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: This was a rural Union in North Lancashire.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, but where the rural district has the whole advantage of a teeming population. I will acquit the right hon. Gentleman of any sinister intention; it was an innocent selection, but it is one which will not strengthen our confidence in the right hon. Gentleman's statistical demonstrations in the near future.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: There are examples of precisely the same character in Shropshire and in Hampshire.

MR. GOSCHEN: But how does the right hon. Gentleman account for the fact that the average is 2s. 3d.? The right hon. Gentleman, in selecting all the low cases, adopts a new statistical method. How can the right hon. Gentleman get 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. if the average is 2s. 3d.? There must be a number of others in that case where it is 3s. or more. I think the effect of the right hon. Gentleman's method will not be to convince the House that he has at all impaired the case which hon. Members interested in the rural districts have made out. Let me give one more figure. I find in the Report of the Secretary of State for India that in 1868 out of a total of £16,504,000 the rates raised in purely rural districts were £1,416,000. Of a total of £27,818,000 paid in rates in 1892, the purely rural districts supplied £2,109,000, a difference of £693,000. Then where is the reduction of the rates? The House must be warned that by the system of averages they may possibly be deluded into misunderstanding the actual position of the case. Here we find that the right hon. Gentleman has made very careful inquiry, with the result that notwithstanding the subventions, increases of rateable value or decreases of rateable value, notwithstanding changes in the rate in the £1, the fact remains that in the rural districts £700,000 more is raised in rates now than were raised before.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): And the average rate is 4½d. less.

MR. GOSCHEN: That is just my point. If you raise more in the rural districts they actually pay more. These two facts—namely, that in the rural districts they have paid more rates, while the rate in the £1 has gone down, can only prove one thing, and that is that the rateable value cannot have decreased in those particular places where actually more rates are paid. I wish to give one more illustration with regard to the payment of rates, and it is one which shows how the situation is changed since 1871. Take an estate bringing in £8,000 a year, paying rates amounting to 2s. 6d. in the £1, and with mortgages and incumbrances absorbing £4,000 a year. The position of the landowner in 1868 would be this—that he would receive a gross rental of £8,000, and, after paying mortgages and incumbrances, there would remain for himself £4,000, out of which £1,000 would be paid in rates. Then the rents fall 25 per cent., and the gross rental is £6,000 instead of £8,000. The incumbrances remain the same, £4,000; but the rates fall in proportion to the rental, and are now £750 instead of £1,000. The landowner, however, has to pay that £750 out of £2,000, leaving a margin of £1,250, instead of paying £1,000 out of £4,000, leaving a margin of £3,000. It is in this way that the pressure of rates may be felt extremely heavily, and may come home to every agriculturist far more severely, because of the fact of the margin having been reduced. I doubt whether it is generally understood to what an extent the nominal income from estates in land differs from that which a man is really able to spend. I can assure the House that I am in possession of a vast number of cases which have been sent to me by owners of land, who have actually submitted to me their accounts, or the result of their accounts, and I have been staggered to see the small amount of net income which remains over to spend. And here we come to this point. You have two owners side by side. One of them has kept up his estate to the best of his ability, and has pinched himself in order to do justice to the buildings and to the demands of his tenants—and is, in fact, a good landlord in every respect. His neighbour, on the other hand, has neglected his estate, and has kept or spent a larger portion of the rents he has received. They both die, and what happens! The property of the good landlord is valued on his improvements, while the property of the other landlord escapes a considerable portion of the Death Duty. I know of cases where the income of five, six, seven, eight, and, in one case, even 10 years will be necessary before the estate can be cleared of the enormous duty which you are placing upon it. The outgoings are so heavy. I have seen a case where the outgoings are as 40 to 60. I have seen a case where the subscriptions and charities alone absorbed two-ninths of the whole net income of the landlord. Hon. Members say these are large incomes, but it is the fact, and hon. Members should appreciate the fact, though there are some in the House who have not done so, that it is not desirable to penalise these landlords, who no doubt have vast estates, and who turn their wealth into the direction of keeping their estates in splendid order, and in being model landlords for all those who surround them, and who may learn many lessons in farming and otherwise from their landlords. It is certain that in many of these cases they will have to pay from 8 to 10 years' income of their estate in order to meet this heavy duty. Can they continue this expenditure? What is the heir to do when he comes in? His first visit will be to the money lender, unless there is very considerable personal property attached to the estate. What is he to do? There are two alternatives. One is that the estate will be less well kept, the other is that it will be broken up. But you cannot always break estates up. Still, I admit many hon. Members would like to see that result, and if that is their policy no doubt they will find a good many adherents amongst their constituents. But I do not believe it is the view of the Government; and if their proposals have this effect it is not because they desire it. But the right hon. Gentleman plays a little too much to the gallery as a democratic financier. I cannot believe he would wish to see some of these results. But many landlords will not disperse their estates; they will do that which has so often been done, and which is a great misfortune; they will leave their estates in the care of agents, and will live in London or abroad until they are able to save enough money to enable them to live on their estates. They will not part with them so easily as hon. Members think they are likely to do. Then the question arises—What is the policy of the Government? I venture to think the scale imposed is too high; and, as I have explained before, the right hon. Gentleman will frustrate his own purpose, and in the case of these great landed estates he will do much to damage that which is very valuable. It has been pointed out over and over again that the agricultural population is not likely to gain either by the dispersion of these properties or from their abandonment in consequence of the owner living abroad. Absenteeism has done much already to damage a great portion of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will say that these prophecies have often been made before. He said they were made in 1853. Yes, but parts of these prophecies have unfortunately come true. It was prophecied that the landed interest would suffer. The landed interest has suffered and is suffering, and I join with my hon. Friend in thinking that whatever may be the relative proportions of the burdens between personalty and realty it is not at a moment such as this that heavier taxes should be placed upon these properties. But we have not argued this question simply from the point of view of great proprietors. It is the squires, as has been pointed out, that will suffer most severely, and no one has attempted to answer the excellent speech of the Member for Thirsk, who pointed out how the yeoman farmers would suffer. Other hon. Members have pointed out how Irish tenants and Scotch crofters may suffer in the same way. I have had papers put into my hands which would show that in their case there are points which will have to be carefully examined. The fact is, the whole scale is placed on too high a scale of duty, and not only that, but the changes which have been rendered necessary by the right hon. Gentleman's view of putting personalty and realty on the same footing have affected realty at some of the lower grades. Surely the right hon. Gentleman does not want to put further taxation on the tenants in Ireland. But when he adopts the new principle of taxing the *corpus* and abandoning the Succession Duty he will find himself landed in new difficulties. I have only one further remark, and it is with reference to the final passage of the speech of the right hon. Member for Bradford. I sympathise with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in having to find money to cover a deficit which he has reduced to £2,300,000. But yesterday the right hon. Member for Bradford spoke of a deficit of £4,000,000.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I said the money we had to find for the expenditure upon the Navy was £4,000,000.

Mr. GOSCHEN: No, no. In the more florid portions of his peroration the right hon. Gentleman made this remark: "Here are £4,000,000 to find, and if you reject our Budget how are you going to find that money?" The right hon. Gentleman dangled £4,000,000 before us, and wanted to frighten various interests in the country by saying, "If you reject this Budget you will either have to pay additional Income Tax, to the extent of £4,000,000, or you will have to pay more on tea and tobacco." But he forgot that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has reduced the deficit to £2,300,000, and the question the House has to decide and will determine at the end of these discussions is whether the right hon. Gentleman has chosen the best means of finding that sum. The right hon. Gentleman has been complimented upon his ingenuity and on the vastness of his proposals. It remains to be seen whether those proposals are workable and will stand the test of argument, or whether you are to carry into the whole of the vast interests which they touch fresh complications, fresh inequalities, and fresh injustices. I believe that will be the upshot of the Budget, and under these circumstances I shall range myself with my hon. Friend the Member for Thirsk, and I shall vote against the Second Reading of the Bill.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, that while he did not propose to deal at any length with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square—a speech couched in a very different tone on many points from that which marked other speeches delivered from the same Benches—he would call the attention of the House to the fact that the right hon. Gentleman, unlike the attitude he assumed in 1885, had now ranged himself on the side of the holy alliance of the land and liquor. What, however, they had to ask the Opposition in regard to this matter was, if they destroyed this Budget, were they prepared to have a Dissolution on the question whether one form of property, realty, should obtain exemption on the lower scale of remissions, and in regard to the principle of graduation? That point had been too much forgotten in the course of the Debate. The position was this: a certain amount of money had to be raised at the present moment, and the burden must necessarily fall on some one's shoulders. Everybody admitted that increased taxation in itself was bad and oppressive, and, indeed, very often injurious. But the point was, whether, at the present moment, the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were not the best way of meeting the deficit which the House generally admitted ought to be met. The discussion had turned chiefly on the question of the Death Duties, and they had heard wails from hon. Members interested in the land as to the fall in prices and the rise in rates. Every Member sympathised very much in the distress of the landed interest; but hon. Gentlemen talked as though the Government were gratuitously raising the question of the taxation of land at the present moment. He believed that the proposals of the Budget in regard to the Death Duties were in themselves just and proper; it was imperative that they should be carried out, as money must be raised somewhere, and realty ought to be thankful that it had for so long a period escaped equalisation. Further than that, it should not be forgotten that while an additional burden was being thrown upon realty, considerable relief was being granted in other directions, especially in the matter of Income Tax assessments. Much of the discussion had been directed to the question of the incidence of rating, and in regard to that he might point out that the figures placed before the House by the Secretary for India had not been controverted, and it was clear that rates had not been increasing to the extent supposed. But why were they discussing this question at all at the present moment? The principle of the Death Duties was not in dispute, and the only object at the present moment was to obtain simplicity of and equalisation in the tax. The whole of our fiscal system except in respect of the Death Duties was founded, as it should be, on a principle of simplicity, and it was to be regretted that the same policy had not in the past been applied to these duties. But when they once began to introduce equality it became necessary not to level down personalty but to level up realty. He was quite sure that the House would not desire that in any way the Death Duties in regard to personalty should be reduced, and they had further to remember that while they were levelling up the duties on realty they were also putting on personalty a considerable new contribution in respect of the Death Duties also. While the equalisation would chiefly affect realty, the principle of graduation, introduced for the first time in these duties, would affect personalty much more, and it would be impossible to introduce the principle of graduation in connection with the Death Duties without also introducing the question of equality of treatment. The only way to bring that equality about was the way proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, that all property coming at death should, in regard to probate, be charged at its true capital value. The result of the proposal was to substitute for five complex duties two practically simple duties, one on the *corpus* of the estate and the other in respect of legacies. At present settled property under a marriage settlement only paid 1½ per cent. instead of 3 per cent. as personalty; there were too many exemptions and allowances, and the object of the Budget was to redress the inequalities which consequently prevailed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, said the Government had not answered the hon. Member for Thirsk, but the figures which the hon. Gentleman gave seemed to prove the necessity for this greater equalisation of the Death Duties.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk): I was taking the case suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, where he gave relief.

MR. S. BUXTON said, that no doubt the hon. Member did allude to one such case, but his chief point in regard to these cases was that they would be paying more Death Duty in consequence of the equalisation. At present an enormous advantage was given to realty. Let them take the case of a child with the greatest expectations of life coming into an estate, which in the case either of realty or of personalty would be of the value of £10,000. In the case of personalty he would have to pay 3 per cent., but in the case of realty he would only be charged on the capital value, which would not probably be more than £5,800. That was an enormous advantage obtained by realty. Again, if they took an extreme case the other way they would find realty obtained an equally great advantage. Take, for instance, the case of a man 90 years of age. He died and left an estate of like value to that he had cited in the case of the child. His heirs would pay 3 per cent., not upon £10,000, but upon something like £4,000. Again, they found very great inequalities in the method in which land was at present assessed — especially as between urban realty and rural realty. Under the present system estates were assessed for duty on the capitalised rent. In the case of agricultural estates, that to a very large extent represented the real capital value, but in the case of urban estates that was very far from being the case, especially where the estates were close to large towns. He was informed by the Inland Revenue Authorities that the average number of years' purchase at which realty was taken was 14. That was, as he was informed, the average throughout practically the whole of realty when assessed for Death Duty. Probably the number of years' purchase at which freehold and agricultural land would in future be assessed would be something between 18 and 20 years; but in the case of improving ground rents, he was informed that the ordinary estimate that would be taken of their capital value would be 28 years' purchase.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: On what does the hon. Gentleman found his statement, that of 18 or 20 years' purchase. Is it not as a fact 24 or 25 years?

MR. S. BUXTON said the hon. Member was mixing up two things—he was mixing up the question of the Estate Duty with that of the Probate Duty. The figures he had quoted were those officially supplied to him by the Inland Revenue Authorities. The great point was this, that the proposals of the Bill would be of advantage to agricultural land and of disadvantage to urban land. He did not wish the House to take his figures as absolute, but his point was that as between agricultural land, in which hon. Members opposite were specially interested, and urban land, the new system of assessment would be to the advantage of agricultural land. As regarded the system of capital value now being introduced in the case of agricultural land, the number of years' purchase which would be added would not exceed probably four or five, but in the case of the ground rents 14 would be added.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES pressed the hon. Gentleman to say upon what basis he arrived at the conclusion that 18 or 20 years' purchase at the outside would be the assessment of agricultural land.

MR. S. BUXTON said, the figures were those of the Inland Revenue Authorities, and gave what they believed would in the future be the valuation put on agricultural land. The present position of leaseholds seemed to him about the strongest argument that could be used in favour of the proposals of the Government. At the present moment, though practically realty, they were treated as personalty and charged the full Probate Duty. While a great deal had been heard with regard to the agricultural interest, no objection had been raised as to the effect on settled personalty and urban realty. No doubt they all admitted that the agricultural interest was a very important one, but it only represented 36 per cent. of the whole, urban realty representing 44 per cent., and settled personalty 20 per cent.

MR. GOSCHEN: I did not touch the question of settled personalty at all?

**Mr. S. BUXTON** said, he did not understand the right hon. Gentleman to raise any objection to the proposed treatment of the settled personalty and urban realty, nor indeed did he appear to take any objection in principle to the general proposals of the Government in regard to the Death Duties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, too, said he had no objection to offer to the extension of the Death Duties to urban realty, and, taking into account the valuable nature of the latter kind of property, its increasing value, and the fact that it did not entail any question of breaking up estates, he did not think that any objection would probably be raised. With regard to that question, they had to consider the strong arguments raised by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the burden of the rates. He scarcely thought those arguments applicable to this case. In the case of urban realty the occupier bore the whole of the rates, and, therefore, he would be affected much more than the owner. It was interesting to observe that out of the whole amount of rates no less than 62 per cent. were paid in the Metropolitan and urban districts. In those districts they were practically borne by the occupier and were paid, not by realty, but by personalty. Therefore, the position of the Opposition was narrowed down to the question of the effect of the Government proposals on agricultural realty; but while no doubt the Bill did affect that interest, and every one was sorry that fresh burdens should be placed upon it, it very much more seriously affected the two other interests to which he had referred, which paid rates to the extent of 62 per cent. of the whole. It did seem to him under the circumstances just and right that these equalisation proposals should be carried through, even if certain interests thereby affected were in a somewhat distressed condition. It was impossible in imposing such a duty as this to distinguish between rural realty and urban realty. He did not think that either of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite had weakened the effect of the figures which had been given by the President of the Local Government Board. His right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford had looked into the matter again, and informed him that his figures included every single rate in the localities to which they referred. Those figures proved that whilst the valuations had unquestionably diminished the total rates in the £1 had gone down, and were very much lower than formerly.

**Mr. W. LONG** said that, before the hon. Gentleman left this subject, he would like to say with regard to the two Unions in Wiltshire, referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, he had that day received assurances from those Unions that the rate in one case was 2s. and in the other 2s. 6d. The figures of the right hon. Gentleman were substantially lower.

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE** said, he had consulted the officials of the Local Government Board, who affirmed that the figures were supplied to them by the Local Authorities of the districts which he named in his speech.

**Mr. S. BUXTON** reminded the House that the Secretary of State for India had shown that the burden in the £1 on the shoulders of the owners in rural districts, taking the country generally, had been reduced by 4½d., the reduction being largely due to the Imperial subventions, which had amounted in some cases to 10d. or 1s. in the £1. It was important that this should be borne in mind when they were considering whether it was just and right that some extra burden should be imposed on realty. They should also remember that the Budget itself did something, as hon. Gentlemen opposite had said, to "temper the wind to the shorn lamb." The ½ per cent. in respect of lineals, which was put on in 1888, was now taken off, another duty disappeared, the benefit of payment by instalments was preserved to realty, and relief was given in respect of Income Tax under Schedule (A). This relief had been received by hon. Members opposite in a very grudging spirit. He believed, however, that many landowners would find that they would still be as well off as now, perhaps even better off, with this reduction of Income Tax, which was a set-off to the extra Death Duty which land would have to bear. The farmers' benefit, he felt sure, would be considerable. As compared with urban realty, rural realty would gain a great deal. What were the actual additional burdens that would be placed on rural realty? The deductions on the Income

Tax being taken into account, the whole extra burden on rural realty would not amount to more than £400,000 or £450,000 a year. But the annual value, as assessed for Income Tax, of that property amounted to about £50,000,000, so that the burden would not be more than 1 per cent. per annum, or 2d. a year per acre. He could not believe that this burden of 1 per cent. on the annual profits of agricultural land was likely to cause the breaking-up of estates. As he understood the matter, it was the intention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal tenderly with landed estates, especially such as had large mansions and were really producing no annual rent. It was intended in arriving at the capital value to take into account all the mortgages and encumbrances that might be charged on an estate, and the amount of the rates would, of course, also be one of the matters taken into consideration. Where temporary loans had been raised for the purpose of improving properties the unexpired portions of such loans would certainly be taken into account and operate to reduce the estimate of the capital value. The right hon. Member for the St. George's Division said that an owner who had expended money in improving his estate would have to pay on his own improvements. That, however, would not be the case, unless by his improvements he should have improved his rent-roll and really increased the value of the land. If, as the result of the man's expenditure, the value of the estate had not improved at all, the circumstance would, of course, be taken into account in estimating the value, and there would be a reduction. He admitted that there were greater difficulties in the way of the assessment of realty than there were in the way of the assessment of personalty, but those difficulties were by no means insuperable. Why should not a landed estate be capable of assessment, when complicated assets like leaseholds and canals could be assessed? The proposals of the Government were far-reaching in their effect, but they had to raise a certain amount of money, and they believed that, on the whole, their plan was a fair and proper way of meeting the financial needs of the country. He hoped the House would agree to the Second Reading of the Bill as a real and earnest endeavour to meet the necessities of the country without placing undue burdens upon any particular interest, while endeavouring to spread the burden of taxation as widely over the community as possible.

*MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, N.W., Horsham) said, they had now received an assurance that the Inland Revenue intended to proceed on the lines of taking year's purchase as the principle of valuation, based on annual value. He could assure the hon. Member that should the measure receive a Second Reading, they on that (the Opposition) side of the House would see that effect was given to that view before the Third Reading. He (Mr. Johnstone) had several objections to take to the measure. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk showed clearly that the Budget was a vindictive one, and was intended to punish those who were anxious to see the naval forces of the country brought up to their proper strength. He (Mr. Johnstone) need not labour the point that the Budget was vindictive; but, more than that, he was clearly of opinion that many of its proposals were unnecessary, and for that proposition he claimed the support of the Under Secretary for the Colonies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had reduced the deficit by diverting the Sinking Fund in a manner contrary to all his convictions—had reduced it to £2,379,000. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to put increased duties upon beer and spirits and to add 1d. to the Income Tax. These two things alone would have brought him in £3,120,000, so that if he had not wished to stray into the heroics of finance his Budget was made for him. And with the diverting of the Sinking Fund he would have been quite able to reduce his deficit, and to do something in the interests of the agricultural population which would have been very greatly valued. If the Government had shown an interest in the agricultural population it would have been heartily reciprocated. The suggestion had been made by a supporter of the Government that the owner should be relieved of Income Tax under Schedule (B). The occupier also sought to be relieved. This would have been welcomed by the agricultural class, and the payments into the Exchequer of Income Tax under this

Schedule were so small in amount, so costly in collection, and so annoying to those from whom they were collected that it would be a positive saving to the Exchequer if that Schedule were swept away altogether. It would have been, too, an acknowledgment of the sad distress under which the agricultural community had been suffering for many years, and which was intensified in the present year. The gross assessment under this Schedule was £58,000,000, but of this only £24,000,000 were actually chargeable, and the payments for 1892 in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland amounted to the very beggarly sum of £260,000, or something less than the amount an eighth of a penny of Income Tax would give. He would appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that even with such a surplus as he expected to get from his own figures he was in a position to give the agricultural class the benefit of the entire sweeping away of Schedule (B), and not to allow that miserable pittance of £200,000, which was drawn out of the pockets of a most long-suffering class, to appear in the Financial Returns of another year. The amount now raised would be greatly reduced under the proposed alteration, and by raising the limit of partial exemption from Income Tax from £400 to £500 there would be fewer persons to pay. There must be very few tenant farmers making a profit of £500 a year from their farms. The Income Tax collectors would tell the right hon. Gentleman whether the expenses of bookkeeping and collection under Schedule (B) would not justify him as a financier in doing away with taxation under that Schedule altogether, and allowing the farmers to make their returns under Schedule (D) instead. The right hon. Gentleman having got his surplus threw it away. In the first place, he raised the limit of exemption from Income Tax. As to that, he (Mr. Johnstone) would say nothing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had been well answered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, on the quotation he had read from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian in 1876. He (Mr. Johnstone) would only say that no doubt a great many estimable people would benefit by the increase of limit of exemption. One could only envy them their good fortune. Another way in which the surplus was thrown away was by deductions under Schedule (A); which they were told would represent between £700,000 and £800,000. Only a small portion of that, or some £160,000, would go to the agricultural interest. The right hon. Gentleman made much of this concession, but he took away the benefit by his further proposal as to the Death Duties. What was the problem which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had set himself to solve? Having gone out of his way to dissipate the surplus which by the increased taxation he would be in a position to receive, the right hon. Gentleman set himself to the problem of endeavouring to equalise the Death Duties. In attempting this he was, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, pricking a gigantic bubble, for the inequality was measured by the right hon. Gentleman himself at no more than between £300,000 and £400,000, which, in his own words, was all that he asked from the landed classes to place their taxation on an equality with that of others; although, since he said this, that sum appeared to be growing in dimensions, it having already been stated by a Member of the Government that evening that the sum would be between £400,000 and £450,000. The increase which was placed on personal property by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's scheme would amount to nearly 25 per cent., as against an increase of 115 per cent. on real property. This was a very serious increase on personal property, but it was a much more serious increase on real property. How was it obtained? The House had had no figures which would enable it to apprehend how much of the increase which the Chancellor of the Exchequer expected to gain from real property, or from personal property either, would be due to the graduation of the duty or to the suggested novel mode of valuation. There was no reason whatever for departing from the present practice, and he believed that the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) had felt that when he was speaking. Was it right to take the principal value in dealing with land?

In his opinion, the practice at present in force of measuring a man's interest by the expectation of his life was the right and proper way of valuing landed property for the payment of Death Duties. Landed property differed in one essential particular from personal property. Personal property was destructible and moveable. The man who succeeded to it could go to his bank and get foreign notes or a bill of exchange for it, and could then take it out of the country. Land, on the other hand, was indestructible and immoveable, and, as long as the country remained, land would continue to be available for taxation by successive Chancellors of the Exchequer. A man's interest in real property could be no greater than his life, and it was therefore right and proper that that interest should be made the basis of assessment and not the absolute value. Another reason for making a difference between real and personal property in reference to taxation was the expense of realisation. If a man wanted to realise personal property he had only to go to his broker or his banker, and he could realise with very little trouble and at slight expense. If, however, he wished to realise real property he must go to the expense of obtaining a valuation and subject himself to the uncertainties of a sale. If he succeeded in selling he had to pay a large commission on the price realised, and if he did not succeed he had to pay a very handsome fee for having the property put up to sale and for the preparation of the particulars of sale. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had suggested that the most respectable and well-known surveyor should be employed to value the property. Apparently everybody was to go to Messrs. Lumley, or to some firm of that sort. But who was to pay the expense? Was the right hon. Gentleman aware that when a skilled and experienced valuer was employed the valuations were charged for at a very respectable sum? The cost of valuation would certainly add another half per cent. or more to the Death Duties. The remuneration of the valuer and the agent depended more or less directly upon the amount of his valuation. Was it desirable to increase the number of professional witnesses, if he might, without offence, so call them, whose remuneration depended directly upon the largeness of their valuations, and was it a comforting condition of things to the successor of real property that his only way out of it would be to appeal (after he had paid his duty) to the High Court of Justice, where eminent counsel, with probably 100 guineas on their briefs, would be employed on each side, while eminent valuers would have to be engaged at similar fees to go over the property? These were all reasons why there should be a difference in the valuation between real and personal property. Then there was the uncertainty of the valuation to be borne in mind. Everybody knew how two or three valuers, apparently of equal ability and equal powers of judgment, would differ from one another. The anticipated yield of the Death Duties showed that the realty of England represented 5-27ths of the property of England—that was to say, less than one-fifth of the capitalised property of England was represented by realty. The Secretary for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) said the other day that while rates were going up in the towns they were decreasing in the country, but the right hon. Gentleman did not appear to see the point that four-fifths of these local burdens were borne by one-fifth of the property of England. Ought not the one-fifth which bore four-fifths of the burden of local taxation to be placed on a somewhat more favourable footing than personal property with regard to the Death Duties? If £400,000 was all that was wanted to redress the inequality which for years had been the subject of harangues from travelling vans and Radical platforms, it was difficult to understand why the present scheme should have been brought forward to deal with so small a grievance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to redress this small inequality, had first very largely to increase taxation and then to decrease liability to the Income Tax under Schedule (A). The right hon. Gentleman's argument came to this:—"If I pay 18s. instead of £1 when I am alive, it will be very satisfactory to me to have to pay 43s. instead of £1 when I die." He (Mr. Johnstone) did not think that this would at all tend to thrift or to careful management of property. The Death Duty paid by a man who succeeded his father in the possession of property of the value of a little over £100,000 would be £6,000. Taking 3 per cent. as the yield of the property, he would have to pay two years' gross income, and probably four years' net income, and very likely more than that. This was not a question only for owners or for landlords; far from it. Anyone knew that there was no worse position for a tenant than to live on a starved property, nor for a labourer than to work on an estate where the owner could not afford to live on it, and where a shilling could not be spent unless there was a return for it. He strongly urged upon hon. Members to pause before accepting these proposals, which, to his mind, would have the effect of crippling the owners of land, and, through them, of placing their tenants and labourers at an extremely heavy disadvantage. He believed it would go further, and check the natural and economic change in the ownership of land which they could see was now going on. When an estate was sold nowadays it was more often than not bought by a man who had made his fortune in business. If so, he was usually a man of a certain age, and no practical man of business would buy a property upon which at his death a large sum of money would have to be paid away in the form of Death Duties—money which would be far better distributed among his children. Then, how was timber to be assessed? The present system of valuing was intelligible, but the Bill left it an open question whether the unlucky successor was to be charged for every stick of timber on the estate when he went in, or only when the trees were cut down. The Bill as it stood bristled with difficulties of all kinds. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his opening speech said the guiding principle of taxation should be that the burden should be imposed where it would least heavily fall, but in this measure he had most widely departed from that guiding principle, and had laid the burden of taxation upon those shoulders, not where it would fall lightest, but where it would be felt the most heavily. He therefore urged the House to consider the matter very carefully before accepting the proposals which would cripple and mulct so unfairly one particular class of the community.

*MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that earlier in the Debate the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's laboured with great pains to show that he was not responsible for the introduction of the principle of graduated taxation into the fiscal policy of this country. He could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman protested too much. It was true that when the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Estate Duty in 1889 he was very careful to tell them it was not graduation, but they could not by theory explain away the fact, and he submitted that, in the ordinary use of language and in the judgment of plain men, the Estate Duty of 1889 was undeniably the first step in graduated taxation. In the further discussion of that principle the right hon. Gentleman might, he thought, have well spared them his scornful reference to colonial precedent. Did the right hon. Gentleman think there was nothing they could learn from the colonies? Did he think that it would be beneath the dignity of the Mother Country to learn from her colonial children? He must say he respectfully differed from the right hon. Gentleman. He thought there was much which the Mother Country might usefully learn from the colonies. He could not but remember that Land Law reformers of repute and authority had gone to the colonies for their precedents, and he thought the reference fell with a particularly bad grace from the right hon. Gentleman, who was a Member of a Government which, in adopting free education, distinctly followed colonial precedent. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that these Death Duties would be evaded. He might take objection to the use of the word "evaded," for when a person did not bring himself within the provisions of an Act of Parliament it was not strictly correct to say he evaded that Act of Parliament. But he waived the objection to the term, and he asked how were these persons to evade these duties? The right hon. Gentleman told them that they were to be evaded by the distribution of colossal fortunes in the lifetime of their owners. He submitted that that would be, if it happened, an excellent social result. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that it would be positively a wicked thing for a statesman, in framing a fiscal policy, to pay the slightest attention to anything except the raising of money. Again, he respectfully differed from the right hon. Gentleman. He thought that a fiscal policy might be properly made a great instrument of social reform, and that a Chancellor of the Exchequer might regard with equanimity some diminution in the produce of a tax if thereby great and beneficent social results were obtained. Passing away from the right hon. Member for St. George's, he desired to say a few words with reference to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Thirsk. The hon. Gentleman fought his case with all a lawyer's keenness, and had shown a keen appreciation of those places where he might press heavily and those over which it was necessary very delicately to skim. He noticed the hon. Member treated very slightly and cavalierly what seemed to him the most able and convincing speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, delivered the other night. How did the hon. and learned Member deal with that speech? He seemed to admit that the Secretary for India had shown that "land," strictly so called, was lightly taxed, but then he said that houses were heavily taxed, and he massed lands and houses together and spoke about the burdens upon realty, and told them that realty paid so much. But "realty" was only an expression. Realty paid nothing, and could pay nothing, and what they had to ask was, not what paid but who paid? It was significant that, from the beginning to the end of his speech, the hon. Member ignored the incidence of local taxation. So far as lands were concerned, it might perhaps be conceded that the real incidence of the local rates was upon the landlord as regarded agricultural land, but with regard to houses it was totally different. The local rates upon the houses were paid in part, no doubt, by the owner of the land upon which the house stood, and in part also by the occupier of the house. That was to say, where a house occupied an ordinary site, where the proportion of the ground rent to the total annual value of the house was small, it was, he thought, admitted by most economists that by far the larger part of the rate fell upon the occupier of the house. And these considerations were very important when it was borne in mind that in 1891, whilst the rates borne by land amounted only in round figures to £4,250,000, the rates which were borne by houses amounted to £22,500,000. The land at the present time was bearing a comparatively light burden as compared with 25 years ago. It might be shown in another way. The figures he was about to give had been taken from the two Reports issued, respectively, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. He found that in 1868 the rateable value of land was something under £40,000,000, and that bore local taxation to the amount of £5,500,000, whereas in 1891 the rateable value of land had fallen to £35,000,000, and that bore local taxation to the amount of £4,250,000; or, in other words, whilst the value of land fell 12 per cent., the burden was reduced by 23 per cent. The hon. and learned Member for Thirsk actually included among the burdens falling upon realty, the real incidence of which was upon the landlord, the Inhabited House Duty. He would test that by an instance which must be comparatively fresh in the memory of the House. In 1890 the right hon. Member for St. George's very materially reduced the Inhabited House Duty on houses of small annual value. The right hon. Gentleman did not recommend the proposal on the ground that it would relieve the burden of the owner, but, on the contrary, that it would affect 800,000 persons of humble means, the class just above the working class, and which was just beginning to wear a black coat. So much for the hon. and learned Gentleman's proposition that the Inhabited House Duty must be included among the burdens on realty. There was another point which had struck him. In the course of this Debate repeated complaints had been made by Members of what might be called the country party on the other side of the House against graduating taxation on the *corpus* of an estate—that was, upon an estate before division. They said we should graduate taxation not upon *corpus*—not upon an undivided estate, but upon each particular succession. But, he asked, who was it who first introduced the practice of graduating taxation upon the *corpus* of an estate? It was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's who was really the source of all the woes of the country party, and when that right hon. Gentleman crossed the floor of the House the country party, he imagined, very little suspected what a Sinon they were receiving within their citadel. In 1889 the right hon. Gentleman imposed his Estate Duty on the *corpus* of personalty, so that if five brothers each took £3,000 under their father's will they would, under the proposals for which the right hon. Member for St. George's was responsible, pay at a higher rate, not because they received more, but because the *corpus*, out of which their share was derived, exceeded the value of £10,000. But there was this further to be said: that the right hon. Member for St. George's was not consistent and was not just, for whilst he applied the principle of graduation to the undivided estate if it were personalty, on the other hand, if it were realty, then the principle of graduation was applied only to each particular succession carved out of the estate, and so the result was this: it was not graduated taxation on the *corpus* of an estate to which objection was taken, for whilst the principle was applied only to personalty hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite approved, but now that it was proposed to apply that principle impartially to the *corpus* alike of personalty and realty it became in their eyes a vicious principle, and they denounced it with that vehemence which the country party always displayed when the smallest of its privileges was called into question. He desired to make one further remark from the point of view of London. This Budget would give satisfaction to a vast body of opinion not exclusively confined to the Radical Party, because it provided the means of securing to the community a part of the unearned increment of land for the people. On the one hand, they had seen land already covered with buildings enormously enhanced in value by public improvements, and, on the other hand, they had seen large plots of land ever growing in value kept for years out of the market without contributing anything, or at all events anything substantial, either to local or Imperial taxation. The Brockwell Estate was a significant example, and he mentioned it not because it stood alone, but because it was a well-known case, the facts of which, he believed, were undisputed. What were the facts? That estate of nearly 100 acres was sold for £150,000, but up to the time of the sale, and for many years before, the land had not contributed more than £81 per annum to the local rates. They were therefore entitled to demand that besides their contribution to the Imperial Exchequer the owners of land in London should pay a special quota through the Death Duties towards the cost of permanent improvements, and thus the way would be paved for a London municipal Death Duty. Before he sat down he desired to refer to a matter which exclusively concerned London, and which was raised the previous night by the right hon. Member for the London University, when he made an appeal on behalf of London for a more equitable distribution of the probate grant. He very much regretted that the President of the Local Government Board made no response to that appeal, which he (Mr. Pickersgill) desired strongly to support. This mode of distributing the Probate Duty grant was fixed in 1888 by the Local Government Act, which provided that the mode then fixed should continue until Parliament should otherwise determine, seeming to contemplate that the system then fixed was not to be regarded as a permanent system. To show that London was not fairly treated in this respect he might cite the high authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's. The original basis proposed for the distribution of this grant was the number of indoor paupers, and upon that basis the share of London would have been very much greater than that which fell to London under the plan which was subsequently decided upon, and it was in reference to that former proposal, under which London would have received much more than it now received, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's used this language. He said—

> "It had been suggested that Members of the Government had been influenced in the arrangement of this part by some favour to the Metropolis, but those who had spoken in this sense had failed to point out or to remember when they made that suggestion—or he thought they would not have made it—that the total result of the relief which was given to the Metropolis and the country generally had been that while the rest of the country benefited to the extent

of 3½d. in the £1 London only benefited to the extent of 2¼d. in the £1."

These observations were, as he had said, applied to a plan under which London would have gained more than she now received, and therefore they applied *à fortiori* to the system of which he now complained. He appealed to the Government to give the matter their very careful consideration. The time was opportune. Two claims to put fresh burdens on London were being raised. In the first place, the Home Secretary proposed, under Section 10 of the Local Government Act of 1888, to transfer the supervision of lodging-houses in London from his own Department and the Metropolitan Police to the County Council, and there were obviously many reasons why it was desirable the supervision of model-lodging houses should be under the control of the medical officer of this Metropolis. The London County Council did not object to take upon itself this duty, but at the same time, whilst the Home Secretary proposed to transfer this duty to the London County Council, he did not propose to place at the disposal of the County Council any funds for the discharge of the service. That, however, so far as finance was concerned, was a comparatively small matter, and he only referred to it for the sake of principle. But there was a larger claim which was being made to impose a burden upon London, which had been raised year after year in this House, and which was regarded in itself as a very reasonable claim. He referred to the claim that London should maintain its own police courts. He thought that was a reasonable and proper claim with, perhaps, one exception—the extradition court at Bow Street, which was an institution of an Imperial character, the expenses of which should be defrayed out of the Imperial Exchequer. With that possible exception it was, no doubt, right and proper that London should maintain its own police courts, but if this burden was to be imposed upon London he thought the time was opportune for a reconsideration of the financial relations between London and the Government. Whilst they regarded their claim as emphatically a just claim, the urgency of the case was illustrated by the observations with which the Secretary of State for India closed his speech the other night when he said—

"At no time during the present century has the average rate in the £1 of rural rates been so low, and I must add that of the London rates so high as during the years 1890 and 1891."

Mr. COMBE (Surrey, Chertsey) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was generally credited with holding the members of the trade to which he (Mr. Combe) belonged, whether brewers or distillers or licensed victuallers, in political hatred and contempt. They all acknowledged the necessity this year of an increase in the taxation of the country, and they did not grumble at it so much, because they believed a good deal of that increased taxation was due to the additional money that was going to be spent on the Navy, and which was generally approved of throughout the country. But what they did object to was the way in which that taxation was laid upon the people. He believed that the saddle of taxation was placed upon the wrong horse, and that horse's back had been so roughly galled by incessant taxation that it would not be wondered at if he and others did their level best to kick off the fresh duties which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to place upon them. The tax on beer and spirits, to which he alluded more particularly, would affect four classes of the community very prejudicially—namely, the brewers and distillers, the licensed victuallers, the farmers, and, lastly, the consumers. As regarded the brewers and distillers, they must remember that the taxes would no longer fall upon a number of private individuals as members of private firms, but upon the ordinary and other shareholders. Some years ago repeated threats were made by various Chancellors of the Exchequer, and the brewers wisely converted their firms into Limited Liability Companies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the brewers were making extraordinary profits, but he thought he was well within the mark when he said that the average of brewery profits at the present time was under 8 per cent. He was, of course, well aware that there were a few exceptions, such as the brewery in Dublin, and perhaps one or two others. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the licensed victualling trade was not in so flourishing a condition as he seemed to indicate. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward the Budget for the first time he spoke of profits of from 100 to 200 per cent., but he did not know how the right hon. Gentleman worked out such profits. He had himself considerable dealings with public-houses, and he had never found anything like such profits. Whether intentionally or not, the figures the right hon. Gentleman gave created a very false impression. It was just possible that at some fashionable restaurant there might be something sold which gave a profit approaching 200 per cent.; but if they went to ordinary public-houses serving an ordinary class of people in an ordinary neighbourhood, they would find that the profits were far from being 200 per cent., and were much nearer 30 per cent. Some might think even 30 per cent. an excessive profit for a licensed victualler to make; but when they considered the unique position of the licensed victualler and the responsible position he held as regarded his licence, and the danger of his having it endorsed or perhaps taken away through no fault of his own, he did not think anybody would say 30 per cent. was an extravagant profit. There was another class of the community, many of whom were among his constituents, who would be seriously affected by this proposal to put 6d. on beer and spirits. He alluded to the farmers. There was no doubt that by the imposition of this 6d. on beer and spirits the right hon. Gentleman was putting on what practically amounted to 2s. a quarter tax upon barley. Let hon. Members just imagine the outburst of righteous indignation which would fill that House if it were proposed to put a tax of a few shillings upon barley in an open and above-board manner. But because it was put on by means of a Beer Duty, that did not make any difference. The fact was, they were putting the foreigner in a better position by this impost of 2s. a quarter than the English farmer. It was perfectly true that the tax on spirits was levied when they were manufactured, and the tax on beer when it was brewed, but the profits on the production of those two articles were so reduced by competition that the imposition of this tax could only have one result, and that was that it would largely increase the use of foreign barley, and at the same time tend to cause a corresponding decrease in the use of English barley. Yet barley was about the one paying crop which the farmer now produced, and it was exceedingly hard—he might go further, and say it was monstrously unjust—to impose just at this time an additional tax upon him. There was another class, a very large class indeed, who would be injured by the tax—he meant the consumer, who would not get anywhere nearly so good an article as he was getting at the present time. The brewers would give it him if they could, but it would be absolutely impossible if they had to bear this additional taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in submitting his Budget the other day, made the astounding statement that his increase in the tax was so small that the consumer would not feel it. He was astonished that so ardent a supporter of Free Trade as the Chancellor of the Exchequer undoubtedly was could deny what he had always believed to be one of the chief canons of the Free Traders, which was that whether they put on a tax or remitted a tax the consumer eventually felt the benefit or the burden; that if they imposed a tax he would ultimately have to pay it, and that if they remitted a tax he would ultimately be relieved. If they proposed, as some Members would desire to do, to put a duty of so much a quarter on corn, what a howl of indignation there would be! It was difficult to reconcile the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the Free Trade maxim he had referred to. All the classes he had mentioned would suffer materially by the imposition of this tax, and perhaps the farmer would suffer most of all. He hoped the Division on Thursday night would prove that the farmers had more friends in the House than some of the Divisions lately had would lead them to suppose.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) said, that he should not have intervened in the Debate if it had not been contended by some hon. Members, and especially by the hon. Member for the Devizes Division of Wiltshire, that the proposals of the Government would benefit the labourers. Those speeches were representative of the platform addresses that had been delivered, and probably would be delivered again in the country. The speech of the Under Secretary for the Colonies tended somewhat in the same direction, for he asked the Unionist Party whether they would like to go to the country as the opponents of the equalisation of the Death Duties. He would say that they could go to the country on the proposals of the Budget, so far as they affected the landed interest as a whole, with a great deal of confidence. He was himself in favour of the equalisation of the Death Duties on realty with those on other forms of property. It was a matter that would have to be dealt with sooner or later. He therefore did not blame the Chancellor of the Exchequer for dealing with the Death Duties; but it was a subject so difficult that unless it were fairly dealt with the present inequalities would be greatly aggravated. If the Government had proceeded by Resolution, and had initiated a non-Party discussion on the burdens of local and Imperial taxation they would have conferred a national benefit; but as the Under Secretary for the Colonies said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in want of money, and the money had to be raised somehow, and at once. The Secretary for India asserted that the rates in the rural districts were lighter than in urban districts. He was not sure that the right hon. Gentleman was right. Recently he compared the rates of a farmer and those of a tradesman in a neighbouring town. The farmer's income was assessed at £550, and in Income Tax and rates he paid £173. The tradesman's income was assessed at £600, and he paid in rates and Income Tax only £31. Therefore, there was a difference of £142 in the Income Tax and local rates between a farmer living in the country and a tradesman living in a town. The right hon. Gentleman also said that local rates were less than they used to be. But the circumstances were different from what they used to be. In olden times the land being the principal form of property in the country naturally bore the greater part of the expenses of the nation. Since those times, however, two important changes had taken place. In the first place, there had been an enormous increase in the amount of personal property; and, in the second place, there had been an entire removal of all imposts upon the importation of agricultural produce. Burdens which were easily borne when corn was at 6s. a bushel became intolerable when corn fell to 3s. a bushel. The difficulty of bearing such burdens became almost insuperable when the Government sought to impose additional charges upon the land, and that the proposals of the Government would place extra burdens upon the agricultural interest he had not heard denied from anyone on either side of the House. Three conclusions might be drawn from the speeches that had been delivered in the course of this Debate—first, that the proposals of the Government would fall heavily upon small estates to pay once for all upon the whole time during which the settlement endured, whereas unsettled estates would pay two or three times as much in the same period; and, thirdly, that they would bear heavily upon the class of small holders. In his opinion, the Government were bound to give satisfactory answers to these three objections. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had done his best to deal with what he evidently felt to be a bad case, and, while admitting that the Government proposals would impose additional burdens upon the land, had endeavoured to minimise those burdens. The fact was, that the scheme of the Government had broken down in connection with agriculture in every test case which had been applied to it. It seemed to him that it did not matter, so far as its effect on an industry was concerned, whether the amounts levied on it was for Imperial purposes or for local purposes. The effect in the way of emptying pockets was the same. The argument of the supporters of the Government was that landed property on the death of the owner should pay the same contribution to the State as other property. To his mind, that proposition was in the abstract unanswerable. But, on the other hand, it was equally true that other property should pay the same contribution to local rates that landed property did; and that demand was almost entirely ignored by the Government, though the justice of it could not be denied. No doubt there was a great difficulty in rating personal property for local purposes. At present that difficulty was overcome by giving grants in aid of local rates, and, in the absence of a better and more scientific plan, he thought those grants ought to be enormously increased. Until some plan was devised and adopted for rating personal property for local purposes, it seemed to him they ought to extend the present system of giving grants from the Imperial Purse in aid of local rates, especially as recent legislation had tended largely to increase the burdens on local rates. As matters now stood a man might have a million of money in the funds or in other securities and yet not be compelled to pay a single penny towards the rates of the district in which he lived. Therefore, without objecting to the principle of dealing with those Death Duties, he said it was unjust to the agricultural interest to put further charges on that interest without, at the same time, giving it a corresponding relief from local burdens. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division delivered a speech for the Bill, but every definite utterance in the speech was against the Bill. The hon. Member said that the treatment of real and personal property alike was right and fair. But that was just how property was not treated in the proposals of the Government. The hon. Member also said that, with regard to local charges, the two kinds of property ought to be on the same footing. But that was just how it was not to be under the Bill. The hon. Member further said that in the case of farmers the Income Tax should be assessed on one-third of the rent instead of one-half the rent. But that was just what was not done. The hon. Member also rejoiced greatly that the Government had been strong enough to resist the proposals to withdraw the grants in aid of local rates. That was a case of being thankful for a very small mercy; and, indeed, he was not quite sure whether those grants would not be affected in an adverse manner by the proposals of the Government. That led him to a point on which he would like to get an answer from the Government. Up to now the local rates had benefited not only by the Probate Duty, which was devoted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the late Government to the relief of local rates, but by the yearly increase in the Probate Duty, and he should like to know whether a share of that annual increase would go towards the relief of local rates in the future?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes; certainly.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS said, he was glad that he had obtained that admission from his right hon. Friend. He would then proceed to deal with the question of how far these local burdens bore upon the labouring classes. It was universally admitted that the position of agriculture, as it affected the labourers, was in a very bad state. He was visiting a landowner of a very small estate in Gloucestershire some time ago, and he found that the estate, which consisted of two farms comprising 1,200 acres, was bought at the beginning of the present century for £24,000, and that large sums had been laid out since on buildings, cottages, and various improvements. Up to 1878 the lands had been let at £800 per annum, tithe bringing it up to £970, or at about 16s. per acre. But land had been steadily going down in the past few years; and now one of the farms was let at £180, which the tenant was about to leave, and the other was in grass and in the hands of the landlord. What was the effect of that state of things? On one farm labour was greatly reduced, and on the other it had disappeared altogether. There were scores of farms in the same condition, and the inference was that this was not the right time to lay further burdens on that industry. He was not advancing this argument for the sake of the landowner or the farmer, but for the good of the country generally, and particularly the labouring classes, whose condition must go up and down according as this state of things continued to exist, or was remedied. The hon. Member for Devizes had seemed to comfort the House and himself by saying that all other industries were depressed — as if that had anything to do with the matter. If agriculture was the same as other industries it would have to take its chance; but he maintained that it was different to all others, agriculture being the industry upon which the prosperity of every other trade largely, if not mainly, depended. If the Government were to ask merchants, traders, or commercial travellers what was the cause of the present bad trade they would say that it was because in the villages and market towns of the country there were no orders, owing to the purchasing power of the land having been so much reduced. The consequence was a slackness in our factories and workshops. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that his object was not to break up large estates into small ones. He (Mr. Jesse Collings) did not believe that was the right hon. Gentleman's object. He only wished the right hon. Gentleman would bring forward some well-considered and just plan that would tend towards the breaking up of large estates. Nothing would receive a heartier support from himself. But while the right hon. Gentleman was sincere in his intention, and was correct as to the Bill not having the effect of breaking up large estates, yet many of his supporters had declared it to be not only their intention but their hope that the effect of the measure would be to break up large estates into small ones. The remarks of the hon. Member for Devizes had been tantamount to that. But how was this to be done? By a side wind, that would bring disaster to the land that was to be broken up. The idea was that the land should be first rendered unprofitable and unoccupied, and then, when its owners were bankrupt, to force the land on to the market. Could anything be more disastrous from a national point of view? A farm could not be shut up for two or three years like a ship or a house. If it were shut up for two or three years, to bring it back to its original condition would require an amount of expenditure equal to the fee-simple. He alluded to the speech of the hon. Member for Devizes in particular, as the hon. Member for Devizes had employed just the kind of platform oratory by which this Bill would be sought to be recommended in the villages. The hon. Member had said that if some of the acres forming large estates were let loose they would be acquired by the rural population and no hardship would be done. That was as much as to say to a village audience "You shall have some of these acres." The hon. Member had gone on to say—

> "If these large estates are sold in small portions, it will be open to grooms to cultivate some of it for their own benefit instead of grooming horses for their master's benefit."

That sounded rather captivating, but it would be far better to advise the grooms to hold on to their situations until they could see some better prospect—which he should like them to have—of getting land to cultivate—a prospect of which there was no trace to be found in this Bill. It seemed to be a mockery—it seemed to be playing with people—to indulge in such language as he had described, conveying as it did more than a hint that such would be the effect of the Bill. During recent years numbers of estates had been sold at ruinous prices, hardly realising the value of the buildings on them, and of the improvements made on them. Could the hon. Member for Devizes name one which had ever been broken up into lots in a manner that would bring it into the hands of grooms and such-like people? The fact was, that if the estates were forced on the market they would be bought by capitalists, and there would simply be a change from one owner to another. Such talk as that used by some of the supporters of the Bill was nothing better than clap-trap when it was addressed to the rural population. No one would welcome more than he would real and just legislation to bring about the state of things described—namely, the placing of a larger number of rural people on the land. They had welcomed under the late Government the Small Holdings Act, which had secured a number of freeholders, and was securing more. In conclusion, he would say that, while in favour of all this distribution of the land where it could be brought about, he was not in favour of this lop-sided proposal which proposed to place extra burdens on the land, but to relieve the land of none of its legal burdens. Hon. Members might argue it as they liked, but the effect of these burdens would fall upon the labouring classes by reducing the amount of labour and lowering wages. If the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment went to a Division he (Mr. Jesse Collings) should vote with him.

*Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, that in listening to the speech of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings) he could not help casting his mind back for a period of 10 years; and supposing he had been gifted with the power of prophecy, and that 10 years ago he had been able to recite to his right hon. Friend the speech he had just delivered, and said that in 10 years' time he would make that speech in the House of Commons, his right hon. Friend would have answered him in these words—"Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?"

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I would not have done anything of the kind.

*Mr. HUNTER said, he should recommend his right hon. Friend when he went searching for statistics among his rural friends to exercise a little more of the critical faculty. He had told them of one case in which a farmer with a rent of £560 paid in Income Tax and rates no less than £170. If that occurred a year ago, with the Income Tax at 6d. in the £1, the Income Tax on £560 would be precisely £7, which would leave £163 for local rates, which was 6s. in the £1. He did not know whether there was any rural parish in England where the rates were 6s. in the £1. That was about the highest figure which the rates attained in any part of the Metropolis.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I can give name and place.

*Mr. HUNTER said, that if it were so, all he could tell the right hon. Gentleman was that he would make a great mistake if he supposed that that was a typical example or fair illustration of the rates that were paid by farmers throughout England. But the right hon. Gentleman had not asked them what would happen to the farmer if that £163 of rates were entirely remitted. Supposing some millionaire bestowed £163 a year on the farmer to pay his rates, what would happen? He (Mr. Hunter) thought that if he were the landlord he should pay a visit to the farm and point out to the farmer that, as he was able to pay £560 rent and £163 to the rate collector, now that the rate collector had ceased to demand the £163, he might just as well for the future pay in the shape of rent £560, plus the £163. He (Mr. Hunter), therefore, failed to see what the farmer would gain by the transaction. His right hon. Friend seemed never to have devoted any portion of his spare time to the study of political economy, because, if he had studied that ever so slightly, he must have been familiar with the A B C of the subject; that whatever a farmer failed to pay in rates his landlord would not fail to exact in rent. With regard to the great question before the House, he was sorry to say he could not congratulate the Chancellor of the Exchequer on producing the best possible Budget. The best possible Budget was one in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to announce that he intended to ask less money in the year that was coming than he required in the year that was past. But they knew that that was not the right hon. Gentleman's fortunate position. They had an addition at one fell swoop of more than £3,000,000 for the Navy. That was a very considerable amount. It amounted alone to a rate of 4d. in the £1 on the rateable value of the United Kingdom, and he could not help thinking that, if this £3,000,000 were to be raised by a rate of 4d. in the £1, it would not be so easy to persuade Parliament of the necessity of the expenditure. The total expenditure had now come to be a very alarming amount. He admitted that it was not so bad as in France or Germany; but, taking the most exaggerated estimate which had ever been put forward as to the income of the working classes and the income which was obtained by persons of over £150, the Imperial taxation now amounted to not less than 8 per cent of the taxable income of the United Kingdom. He believed that if they had more accurate figures than Mr. Giffen had been able to give them, they would find that the Imperial expenditure was nearer one-tenth of the entire taxable income of the United Kingdom. It would be impossible, as it would be unreasonable, to tax the very poor man on his total or gross income. They must allow a minimum for subsistence, and he thought the least sum they ought to deduct from the gross income of a man before he was taxed was £30 a year. That was £6 per head, taking five as the ordinary average of the family. On that calculation they found that the total expenditure for Imperial purposes now fell very little short of 10 per cent., which was an enormous charge on the resources of the country. With regard to the mode in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had attempted to deal with this question, he thought the judgment of the House on the Budget ought to turn on the proposal as to the Death Duties. That was a permanent part of the Budget. If it could come into operation at once there would be no necessity for any other part of the Budget, but it would be some considerable time before the full effect would be felt. No one would deny that the Death Duties were an eminently proper form of taxation—if, indeed, the word taxation could properly be applied to the Death Duties. It was not a tax upon the living; it was rather an interception of a portion of the money which a man left to those who had done nothing to earn it, and who received it without labour and sacrifice. This Budget, if it did nothing else, made one immense improvement in the form of the law. There was nothing worse than the present state of the law with regard to Legacy and Succession Duty. But the feature of the Budget was the equalisation and graduation of the Death Duties. It was almost impossible to conceive that any rational man could for one moment defend the present state of the law. The distinction between personalty and realty was purely pedantic, absolutely incoherent in itself, and only to be explained by reference to historical causes. If anything were required to show the absurdity of that distinction they would find it in the case of Scotland. In Scotland all leasehold houses were real estate, and consequently had hitherto escaped at the lower rate of Death Duty. In future, house property in Scotland would be placed on an equality with house property in England. The right hon. Member for St. George's had boldly attacked the principle of graduation, and had quoted Sir Louis Mallet in support of his view. He would quote an even higher authority. Adam Smith had distinctly and clearly laid down the principle on which all graduated taxation rested in these words—

> "It is not very unreasonable that the rich should contribute to the public expenses, not only in proportion to their Revenue, but something more than in that proportion."

That was graduation. There were persons who wished to use graduation taxation for a very different purpose and in a very different sense to that indicated by Adam Smith, but it was not an objection to a reasonable thing that some persons would make it the ground for an unreasonable demand. How would this proposal operate? He found that out of 51,441 estates left last year only 247 were over £50,000 in value, but these formed 38 per cent. of the entire wealth left. He agreed that in the interest of the Exchequer itself the Death Duty should not be placed too high, but he hoped a rate of 8 per cent. on incomes over £1,000,000 was not too large. The great bulk of the property left was in estates under the value of £50,000; that would therefore be under the 5 per cent. rate. He looked on this Budget as a great step towards bringing our whole system of taxation into accord with the fundamental principle that a man ought to pay according to his ability—that the big burden ought to be put on the strong shoulders, and the light burden on the weak shoulders. In our local taxation there was a very good example of equal taxation. All local taxes were based on the principle that every person ought to be charged the same rate in the £1—that was to say, that a man who had a house worth £100 paid 20 times as much as a man who lived in a £5 house. That principle was general. Shopkeepers were rated on the same basis, so that one did not get an advantage over another, and factories were rated in the same way. One man competing with another paid the same rate in the £1, so that it was immaterial what the size of his business was. They competed on equal terms. The same was true of farmers. As between farmers themselves, the small farmer paid the small rate and the large farmer paid the large rate. But it was alleged that although on each class of property the principle of equality was rigidly observed, it was not observed as between different classes of property. Shopkeepers and manufacturers and farmers were as between themselves equally rated; but it was alleged that, although in each class of property the principle of equity was rigidly observed, that principle was not observed as between the different classes of property. It was argued that a farmer paying a rent of £100 had a very different income from a private individual occupying a dwelling-house rented at £100 a year. The whole grievance of the farmer rested upon the fact that the rent of the farm was taken as the measure of income just as the rent of a dwelling-house was. It was surprising that no hon. Member had called attention during the course of the Debate to the practice and experience of Scotland in this matter. Since

1845 every parish in Scotland had had the power of ordaining a different rating in the £1 for different classes of property, with the concurrence of the Board of Supervision; and the power was acted upon throughout Scotland. The principle acted upon was that the rates should be adjusted so as to correspond as closely as possible to the incomes of the occupiers. A very common form in Scotland was that agricultural land paid 1d. in the £1, shops and places of business 2d., and dwelling-houses 4d. In one-fifth of the parishes of Scotland a most ingenious attempt was made to solve this problem which had vexed so many minds. The poor rate assessments in Scotland showed with what ingenuity the Local Authorities had tried to work it out. There were instances, as in the parish of Greenock, in which the rates were as follows:—Farms, 1d.; shops, 4d.; manufactories, 8d.; counting-houses and offices, 1s.; and banks, 1s. 4d. in the £1. That was a better way of dealing with the injustice, if it were an injustice, of the burdens on agricultural land than the method adopted by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in putting duties on tea and tobacco, and taking money out of the pockets of the working classes in order to relieve the richer ratepayers. The Imperial system of taxation was not an equal system, it was a graduated system; but it was graduated the wrong way, the amount paid in proportion to income rose as the income diminished. The right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, had a horror of graduation; but his horror was confined to cases where the richer classes had to pay the largest share. He had no horror when it was the other way. The slightest examination of our finances must convince anyone that the effect of our system of taxation was that the richer a man was the smaller was the proportion of his income that he paid to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the poorer a man was—unless a mere pauper or beggar—the less his chance of escaping the heaviest burdens. In 1892-3, of £81,000,000 of taxes, £25,000,000 were raised by taxes that were equal in the £1—House Duty, Income Tax, and Death Duties; the revenue from stamps was of two kinds, part being *ad valorem*; and there remained £50,000,000 levied regardless alike of income upon beggar and prince. A series of calculations showed that the percentages of taxation to income paid by varying incomes were as follows: £100,000, 3½ per cent.; £1,000, 5 per cent.; £100, 9 per cent.; and £80, 12 per cent. Local taxation, which was tolerably equal and approximately fair, fell necessarily to a large extent on the rich, but the burden of Imperial taxation fell mainly on the masses of the people, and that was the reason why Tory Governments had been so anxious in the past to raise money by Imperial taxation to the relief of local rates. An Englishman consuming an average of tea, tobacco, and beer, even taking no spirits whatever, paid £3 10s. a year to the Imperial Exchequer. That was equivalent upon a rental of, say, £6 to a local rate of 11s. 8d. in the £1. It was obvious, therefore, which class it was that bore the burden of taxation. Wine and cigars contributed extremely little to the Exchequer in comparison with the humbler beer and tobacco. It was altogether erroneous to say that personalty, properly defined, paid nothing to local rates; a large amount of personalty paid, directly or indirectly, to those rates. There was one class of men who had not received fair attention in the Debate on the Budget—the working men—and he contended that more might have been done for the labouring classes of the country by a reduction of duty on articles of every-day consumption. The working man was in the position of a victim crucified between the two thieves of personalty and realty, squabbling for their own advantage. He regarded the existing system of Imperial taxation as simply a device by which money was ingeniously extracted from the pockets of the labouring classes and handed over to the owners of property. As to the proposed new tax on whisky he could not, as a Scotchman, assent to it if it were intended to be permanent, and therefore he only supported it as a temporary measure, relying in the future on the promises of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or rather upon something more solid, the votes of that House. He could not support this as a permanent measure, because whisky was grossly overtaxed at the present time. There was this gross inequality—that whereas the duty on beer was only 6s. 9d., that on whisky was 11s. per gallon. The difference between the taxation of whisky and beer could not be explained by a reference to alcoholic strength. One gallon of spirits was equal to 10 gallons of beer, and 10 gallons of beer were charged 3s. 9d. and two gallons of spirits were charged 22s. Nor did he think the explanation was physiological or hygienic ; but he pointed out this singular coincidence—that in that House the beer-drinkers of England were represented by 495 votes, and the whisky-drinkers were represented by 175 votes. What ought to be done was to level up the beer and to level down the spirits. He did not deny that there was something in the contention that these taxes were necessary in the interests of morality, though he entered this *caveat*. If it was necessary in the interests of morality to impose this exorbitant tax on spirits, the excessive taxation which resulted from it should not be used to enable the rich people to escape from their proper share of taxation, but if it was to be imposed the surplus should be dealt with in the same way as fines were devoted to meritorious objects—that was to say, the surplus of the tax on whisky and on beer should be given back to the working men, either in the shape of old-age pensions or in some other appropriate form.

*Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) : I own that the more I have been able to consider the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the less I like them, and no part of his proposals—and in that respect I agree entirely with my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's —appears to be open to more question than the part by which he introduces the principle of graduation. The hon. Member for Aberdeen said that the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, had a holy horror of graduation so long as it applied to the rich man, but when it was applied to the poor man he was able to bear it with considerable complacency. I may remind the hon. Member that my right hon. Friend drew no distinction between the poor man and the rich man. His objections to graduation were against the principle as a whole, and on behalf of my right hon. Friend I repudiate altogether the sentiments attributed to him by the hon. Member for Aberdeen. I own that it did not appear to me until I heard the speech of my right hon. Friend that this important part of the proposals of the Government had been by any means sufficiently considered. At the same time, I endorse most fully the sentiments which my right hon. Friend has expressed. One objection to this proposal which has occurred to me is this, that once we adopt this principle and introduce it into our Parliamentary legislation no one can say where that principle is to end. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has introduced a scale of graduation which no doubt he considers to be both expedient and just. Unless he had thought so he would not have proposed it to the House of Commons. But the views of the right hon. Gentleman on this point will in no way be binding on any of his successors in the future ; and I am apprehensive that whenever a future Chancellor of the Exchequer finds himself in difficulties with regard to money, the first thing he will fly to will be to an increase in the scale of graduation. That is a very grave and very serious objection to this proposal. It is an objection which has occurred to many people besides myself, and particularly to a great authority on finance, whose opinion I cannot refrain from quoting in half-a-dozen sentences—

> "I have never been able to observe any absolute rule by means of which that graduation is to be kept within bounds. It is quite clear that it is capable of being carried to a point at which graduation would become confiscation ; and I should be glad if we could be told whether there is any fixed rule which would apply to the custodians of property and to proprietary interests, for the purpose of distinguishing what is moderate and just from what is immoderate and unjust."

Now, that is the opinion of a no less distinguished man than the late Leader of the Liberal Party—of a man whom you acknowledge to have been one of the greatest masters of finance, and at whose feet hon. Gentlemen opposite have sat and worshipped for years in the past. Now, is there any such absolute rule that can be applied as the one he refers to ? I certainly know of none myself. Is there any Member of this House who can name one ? Of course, the right hon. Gentleman opposite will no doubt tell us that what he proposes will amply fulfil both these conditions, and the hon. and learned

Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen in his speech this evening seems to agree in a hesitating way with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in that view. But he spoke with doubt, and whether in his opinion the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman are moderate or not, for my own part I regard them as excessive in the extreme. Moreover, if we once accept this principle, I am afraid we shall be opening the door to what may lead to great abuse and to the infliction of intolerable injustice upon a limited class of the community, who because they are limited will be powerless to resist it. This is one of the objections I entertain to this novel principle, and it leads directly to another—namely, that it is certain to be evaded the moment you begin to make the tax oppressive. Now, will it be oppressive? You have only to take the case of any large estate you like to name in the country at the present time passing to non-lineals, and with three successions—and in many cases successions rapidly repeat themselves—one-half of the estate would be confiscated at once. That being a contingency that may readily arise within the scope and limits of your Bill, every effort will be made by the successor to avoid it—and evasion will become the practice and rule of the day—and I, for one, would never blame anybody who attempted in this way to escape it. My hon. Friend referred to the views upon this question of the late Sir Louis Mallet. But who was Sir Louis Mallet? I concur with my right hon. Friend, for I was familiar with Sir Louis Mallet's views—as it was my privilege to be intimate with himself. He was a distinguished member of the Party opposite, a Free Trader, a Radical, and a prominent member of the Cobden Club. I noticed the Member for Rochdale sitting this evening in his accustomed place, and I wondered at the same time whether he noticed the sneers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the mention of Sir Louis Mallet's name, because he was a bimetallist. I remember an occasion not very long ago, within the last five or six years, when at some banquet at the Cobden Club the Member for Rochdale, who is, I believe, the President of that Society, described Sir Louis Mallet "as the intellectual head of the Cobden Club." I am sorry the hon. Member for Rochdale is not in his place. I am sure he would confirm me in this point, and I am glad that notwithstanding the sneers of the right hon. Gentleman at a question to which I have always thought he has never given adequate attention, that we had on our side, as a bimetallist and economist, so distinguished a man as the late Sir Louis Mallet. But that is the principle which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has thought it right to introduce into our English legislation for the first time—a principle entirely without precedent, and on which this Budget is actually based. I do not for one moment desire to assume a dogmatic position with reference to this matter. But I must say I do regard it as a very grave and serious departure from all sound principles of finance, and one which the more it is considered by this House and the country will be found the more undeserving of support. I must again refer, although I am very sorry to have to do it, to the taxation of real property—upon its capital value. It is not my fault if I have to recur to it again. We on this side of the House have pointed out over and over again the innumerable objections to the Government proposals, especially as they affect agricultural land. To those objections we have had not only no answer from the Government, but no attempt even at an answer from any Member of the Government upon that point up to the present time. I am perfectly satisfied in opposing this proposal to take my stand upon its gross injustice under all the circumstances of the present time. It has been shown over and over again that the result of that proposal must inevitably be to dispossess the owners of their estates in many cases by driving them to forced sales in order to enable them to meet your unwarrantable obligations. That is not my contention only, because it is the contention of the distinguished man who was for so long the Leader of the Party opposite. I have quoted the language of that right hon. Gentleman on a previous occasion; but since then I have found even stronger language of his in reference to this subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, speaking on the 12th of May, 1853, used these words—

> "But I think it would be an invidious, an offensive, and unwise, and an unjust measure . . . . to lay on a tax in such a way as would have the effect of forcing them to part with it; and there is no tax, however moderate it might be, if it were fixed on the capital value of such an estate . . . . which would not have the effect of compelling the possessor to bring his estate into the market."

If that would be the case in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman in the event of the imposition of even the most moderate tax upon land, what will be the case if your proposal is carried out of putting this extremely immoderate tax upon landed property, which will amount to 10 or 12, or in some cases to even 18 per cent. on its capital value? In those cases, especially if there should be more than one succession within even a limited period of time, the result foretold by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian is absolutely certain to happen. Now I want to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer a very plain question upon this point. Is that the object which he and his colleagues have in view? If it is, which I can hardly conceive for a moment, then they are guilty, in the language of the Member for Midlothian, of an invidious, unwise, offensive, and unjust measure. But if it is not their object, it will unquestionably have that result. If they deny that, then, instead of sitting in dull silence and giving no answer to our appeals, let them show that we are mistaken in our views of the matter, and relieve us from the very natural apprehensions which we feel in regard to it. The hon. Member for Northampton—I am sorry the hon. Gentleman is not in his place—has said that some people have been in possession of their land and houses for so long a time that the period has come when they should be called upon to surrender their possessions. The hon. Member is not now in the House, otherwise I should have characterised his language as it ought to be characterised. The hon. Member appears to be consumed with a desire to inflict injury upon all landlords as a class, but I may tell him that he cannot do so without also inflicting enormous injury upon others. Now take the case of some of the great historic places, of which Chatsworth is a type. I only mention Chatsworth, because I think it is generally better known than scores of estates which occupy a similar position. It is a matter of common knowledge that many of those places are maintained at a cost largely exceeding the income of the whole estate to which they belong. They employ hundreds of people and labourers of every description, and they give amusement and enjoyment to thousands. In the summer months the means of conveying the people who go to see these places becomes absolutely an industry in itself. But if properties like these, which are blessed or encumbered with a Chatsworth, are to be mulcted in the manner which you propose, the inevitable consequence will be that one after another they will be shut up, their contents will be sold and dispersed, the whole army of people to whom they give occupation throughout the year will be dismissed and their employment gone, and money will no longer be attracted to the neighbourhood. I venture to say that this is not a sentimental, but a practical objection to your proposals. The hon. Member for Aberdeen observed that nothing had yet been said about taxes upon labour. What does the House imagine that owners of land and houses throughout the country pay in wages to labour in an ordinary year? I have here a Report presented to the Board of Trade in 1891 by a gentleman, who is perhaps among the ablest of a class distinguished for their ability—namely, the Civil servants in this country. It is signed by Mr. Elliot, who is now the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture. In this Report the volume of agricultural wages is estimated roundly as amounting to between £43,000,000 and £50,000,000 a year, and the estimate is arrived at in this way—

> "The principal data upon which the above estimates are framed consist of the census figures of the numbers employed in agriculture, taken in conjunction with estimates of the average earnings, and of the average cost of labour per cultivated acre."

This Return also shows the amount of wages paid by the landlords, and, as the House will observe, the later class contribute a very considerable amount of the whole sum. I turn to another paragraph, and what I find is this, which I expect will be news to some Members of the Government; and certainly it will be news to a great many Members of the House. The Report says—

> "These figures point clearly to the fact that out of the rental paid for agricultural land a considerable payment for wages is made over and above that which comes out of the pockets of the occupier and farmer of the land. It is difficult to make any precise estimate of the amount, but it cannot well be less than 10 per cent., and probably is as much as 15 per cent. of the aggregate receipts. If this be the case the agricultural landlords' labour is not less than £6,000,000, and may probably amount to nearly £9,000,000."

That is a statement which I think is worthy of the serious consideration of this House. This vast amount of wages is what you are going to destroy by the proposals in this Bill, because if the Bill is carried place after place, house after house, will have to be shut up, and although the hon. Member for Northampton may obtain his desire by inflicting injury upon a large number of landlords and owners of property in this country it will be upon the agricultural labourers in the long run that the real burden of this loss will fall. I cannot say that I was altogether re-assured upon this point by what fell from the Under Secretary for the Colonies in his able speech to-night. He gave us some information as to the mode of valuation which is to be adopted, which, as far as I know, was new to the Members of the House. He told us that in the case of agricultural land the value was to be calculated at 18 years' purchase of the net rent, and that he had received that information from the Inland Revenue officials.

Mr. S. BUXTON: I did not intend the House to understand that any fixed number of years' purchase would be taken. What I intended to convey was that, as far as one can judge, the average value of certain classes of property might possibly work out to be about 20 years' purchase, but that in urban cases it might prove to be more, and that it would not be in any sense of the word calculated upon the net rent of the capital value.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Then it appears to have been somewhat negative information that we have got to-night; but I understand the hon. Gentleman to say he had been informed by the Inland Revenue Commissioners that that probably would be the system on which the valuations would be made.

Mr. S. BUXTON: Not the system, but that under the new system, which is taking the principal value and not the capitalised rent, it would probably work out to about 20 years' purchase, though in some cases it would be a great deal more.

*Mr. CHAPLIN: I gather it would be unnecessary, then, for me to ask the question I was going to put—whether the mode of valuation he indicated will be put in the Bill. [Mr. S. Buxton: No.] In some cases, it seems to me, it would be injurious to the rural interest rather than otherwise, because undoubtedly there is a large proportion of the land of the country which, although still able to pay some rent from year to year, yet at the same time it is land which no one would dream of buying, and for which for the purposes of sale there is little, if any, market whatever. With the permission of the House I must now pass to another subject. This Budget proposes, I understand, to equalise the taxation between realty and personalty; and in order to support that proposition the Secretary of State for India began the other night by airily dismissing the question of the Land Tax and of the poor rate as being hereditary burdens. Then he proposed to show by means of figures that in 1891 as compared with 1868 in the rural districts the rates had fallen to the extent of 4½d. in the £1. My right hon. Friend dealt with that speech in the speech he made before dinner, but I desire to say a word upon it myself. As to the Land Tax and the poor rate, in which I am sorry to say my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's appeared to agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, I must take exception emphatically to the view which both these right hon. Gentlemen put forward. The Land Tax was first established in 1692, but both in 1697 and in 1797 it was made abundantly clear that the taxation of personal property was the primary object of that Bill. Again, as to the poor rate, by the Act of Elizabeth every inhabitant of every parish was to contribute to the poor rate according to his ability. It may be quite true that since then personalty has managed to escape from its just contributions; but when the right hon. Gentleman says that land has been bought and sold subject to this state of things, and therefore it has become a hereditary burden, I must remind him that there is a vast deal of land which has not been sold and has not passed hands, and which therefore in no way whatever comes under his category. To tell us that for that reason these imposts have become hereditary burdens is simply to say that because for a great number of years we have been perpetually robbing a number of owners of land who have sold their properties, therefore we are now bound to continue to rob those who have kept them. In other words, if you only continue a glaring injustice long enough, it eventually becomes perfectly fair and right. I protest altogether against this assumption. I affirm that so far from being hereditary burdens of any description they are absolutely nothing whatever of the kind and that you will never do full justice or equalise taxation between the two classes of property unless the views I have put forward are recognised and acted upon. We contend that by this Budget, while you are professing to equalise Imperial taxation between these two classes of property, you are leaving us still in a position of great inequality as regards local taxation. My hon. and learned Friend behind me in his able speech assumed the validity of your "hereditary" plea, for the sake of argument, but even then he showed that we were being unfairly treated, and that the balance was in favour of personal property—and as to the figures of the right hon. Gentleman by which he attempted to show that in rural districts there had been a fall of 4½d. in the £1 in rates, I am prepared to make a present to the Government of all the figures they have quoted. I am satisfied to rest on the quotation made from the Report of the right hon. Gentleman himself, by my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's. In purely rural districts his Report shows that as between 1868 and 1891 there has been an increase in the rates of at least £700,000. Now, what as to the rental? In 1868 the rental was £47,000,000, in 1878 £51,000,000, and in 1891 £41,000,000, and we know that since 1891 there have been immense reductions in addition; so that we have, in the showing of the right hon. Gentleman, an increase in the rates of £700,000 since 1868, and at the same time very greatly reduced means out of which to pay it. If you think you are going to convince the rural ratepayers, either by your system of averages, or by your system of selected Unions, that they have anything to thank you for or that they are better off than in 1868, you will find yourselves very much mistaken. One word more I must say with regard to the concession in respect of the Income Tax on which the right hon. Gentleman has prided himself so much and for which he has received the repeated and effusive thanks of some of his supporters. While I welcome that concession, I think it is more apparent than real. The Government in this matter took Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire for their guide. Now, I believe that these two counties happen to be the two districts in England that have suffered less than any other part of the country from the depression. Where farms are to be let there is still competition for them, and the reductions in rent have been moderate in the extreme as compared with other parts of the country. But go to East Anglia and the counties on the South of England to the vast corn-growing districts. You will find that these reductions in rent have been enormous. In some cases rents have not been paid at all; in others the land has gone out of cultivation altogether. Although the reductions may be great, where an estate is kept in cultivation at all, the outgoings have not fallen, they remain as great as ever. In fact, they are probably greater, for where tenants are in distress every kind of demand is made on the landlord which is not made in prosperous times. You talk of a wretched 10 or 12 per cent. as a just measure of outgoings throughout the country, but I venture to tell you it is far more like 30, 40, or 50 per cent. in many of these parts of the country, and I believe that in some parts of the country the whole of the income is swallowed up by the outgoings. When my hon. Friend the Member for Woodbridge offered his effusive congratulations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer I wondered whether he had calculated what the allowance under Schedule (D) amounted to. I have had a calculation made, and if it is correct, as I believe it is, there certainly is not much to be thankful for. This calculation shows that on the 48,000,000 acres of cultivated land, this £160,000 which was to be such an immediate and sensible relief to the agriculturist would amount to 1d. an acre, and if you take the 63,000,000 acres which include woodlands and forests, it would be nearer ½d. than 1d. per acre, whereas, if you take the rental it would amount to 5s. in every £100, or a fraction over ½d. in the £1. I am ready to offer my thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for this concession for what it is worth, but I cannot say in truth or justice that it appears to me a concession for which there is any ground for the effusive gratitude offered from the other side of the House. As to the increase of the duties on beer, it has been ably pointed out that the ultimate burden of these duties will fall on the agricultural interest—on the barley-grower. It has been shown that with successive duties the price of barley has gradually and steadily fallen, and that the use of sugar is going up, and it was quite clear from the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Armagh that it was not the brewing interest—with the details of which he is thoroughly familiar—but the barley-grower who would be hit all round by these proposals. But there is a new factor, which ought to be taken into consideration. It is not only the great landowners and farmers, the large growers of barley, whom you are injuring. Within the last few years you have created thousands of allotments; and one and all of them grow barley, so that it is the poor man whom you are injuring. The crops of barley the allotment-holders grow are first-rate; I have never seen better. But I hear grievous complaints of the prices they are receiving. The hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division says that, though barley has fallen in price, so have wheat, wool, and meat, and other agricultural products. But I would remind the hon. Member that there is no such fierce competition in barley as there is in other agricultural products. The parts of the world from which we can get barley fit for brewing are very few. We get no barley from countries with a depreciated currency; and no one knows better than the Member for Woodbridge what that means in the case of wheat. The more I consider these proposals, the more apparent it is that real property, and agricultural land particularly, is to be hit. This is at a time when, as the Government knows well, agriculture was never in a worse position to bear an additional burden. While the Government always rise at the Table and profess the utmost sympathy for agriculture, they are regardless of its interests altogether in practice. I know that they have a majority at present, and that we are powerless to prevent any further injuries which they may seek to inflict on us. But I am sure that within and without these walls the flowing tide is steadily against them, and I hope that even the present House of Commons will take courage to itself and reject a measure which, as far as the agricultural interest is concerned, I believe to be the most iniquitous Budget that has been proposed by any Government in modern times.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)

Motion agreed to.

Debate further adjourned till Thursday

## INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

(No. 184.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

The Marquess of CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) said, there was some objection to the Bill on the ground that it permitted the payment of interest out of capital. He did not think the measure ought to be taken at so late an hour.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, the Bill merely conferred upon the Indian Government the same powers as a Committee of the House would have to inquire into the merits of various proposals.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday, 24th May.

## KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS) EXPENSES.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That there be laid before this House a Return showing detailed receipts and expenditure of Kitchen Committee for the years ending the 31st day of December, 1891, the 31st day of December, 1892, and the 31st day of December, 1893."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

MR. HERBERT (Croydon) said, as Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, they had considered the matter, and, although the subject might be interesting to hon. Members, he did not think it would be of interest to the public. A number of particulars might be unnecessarily discussed which could be of no interest except to hon. Members themselves.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

## CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) (CANALS OF GREAT NORTHERN AND OTHER RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 178.)

Read a second time, and committed.

## ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.—(No. 163.)

Read a second time, and committed.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.—(No. 194.)

Read a second time, and committed.

## PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 203.)

Read a second time, and committed.

## NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS BILL.—(No. 144.)

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

## EAST INDIA (ESTIMATE).

Copy presented,—of Estimate of Revenue and Expenditure for 1893-4 compared with the results of 1892-3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## EAST INDIA (FINANCE AND REVENUE ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented,—of the Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India for 1892-3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## EAST INDIA (HOME ACCOUNTS).

Copy presented,—of the Home Accounts of the Government of India 1892-3 and 1893-4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## AGRICULTURE (ROYAL COMMISSION) (ENGLAND).

Copy presented,—of Reports by Mr. R. Hunter Pringle, Assistant Commissioner, on the Isle of Axholme (a part of Lincolnshire, and the Ongar, Chelmsford, Maldon and Braintree Districts of Essex [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

## POLLING DISTRICTS (DERBY).

Copy presented,—of Order of the Town Council of Derby dividing the wards of the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## ARMY (EXAMINATIONS).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Entrance Examinations (in non-Military subjects) of candidates for Commissions in the Army, with Minutes of Evidence and Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

## TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, Nos. 1354 (Spain), and 1355 (Teneriffe) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

## UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented,—of Statutes made by the Governing Body of the House of Christ Church, Oxford, on the 6th December, 1893, altering respectively Statute XXII. and Statute XXIII. of the Statutes of the House [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

## ALLOTMENTS (DUCHY OF LANCASTER).

Copy ordered, "of the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to inquire as to the best method of encouraging the increase of allotments upon the lands belonging to the Duchy."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

House adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, 9th May 1894.*

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL (*by Order.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) moved, "That the Bill be re-committed to the former Committee in respect of Clause 5 (Expense of lighting common staircases)." He said, he did not like to take this course of moving that the Bill be referred back, but it was the only way of dealing with the matter. The Bill, as amended in Committee, proposed to make some changes in the powers of the London County Council with regard to workmen's dwellings or dwellings in blocks. That body had come to the conclusion that it was desirable that the common staircases should be lighted in such buildings at night until sunrise, and they had introduced a clause to that effect into the Bill. The evidence upon that subject had no doubt been considered by the Committee upstairs, and had that been all he should not have thought it his duty to intervene in the matter. But the Local Authorities had been consulted, and grounds had been made out for interference. The Bill, as it had come down to the House from the Committee, was now changed, and instead of throwing the responsibility for lighting the staircases of these private dwellings upon the owners, it proposed that half the cost of such lighting should be defrayed by the Local Authorities out of the rates. He maintained that this was altogether a new thing as applied in this country. He knew nothing, of course, of what had taken place upstairs, but he believed the only precedents brought before the Committee were the cases of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He was unaware to what extent the Committee considered there was a precise similarity of circumstances; he could only say from his own knowledge of those cities, the "wynds," as they were called, were common highways, and there might be a necessity for lighting them in both those towns where they led to blocks of dwellings. It was unnecessary, however, to go into the question as regarded Glasgow and Edinburgh. His objection was to throwing the responsibility of lighting the staircases of blocks of dwellings belonging to private owners upon the ratepayers. This proposal was really "the thin end of the wedge," so often referred to in that House, and he could not exactly see where it was going to land them. The House should be exceedingly jealous of any proposal to extend taxation and rating in this country. The power of taxation conferred by Parliament upon Local Authorities had already grown to an enormous extent; and the House ought, in the interests of the taxpayers, to take every care to prevent any undue extension of the principle of taxation by Private Bill Legislation, and to keep it within very strict bounds indeed. He had no wish to taboo the matter, and had taken this course as the simplest way of calling attention to the matter. He had no objection to the Bill, nor any wish to interfere with it passing. Probably the London County Council had taken good care of such parts of the Bill as required to be brought before the House. If the House should not see fit to refer it back to the Committee, in order that they might reconsider the whole thing, he should certainly feel called upon to move that two of the amended clauses be struck out. For the present, he simply moved that the Bill be referred back, that evidence from the Local Authorities might be taken. Various Local Authorities would be affected by this clause in many different parts of London. Some, of course, would not be affected at all, but in his own constituency there were a great number of these blocks of private dwellings; also on the south side of the river, in Chelsea, and in St. Luke's, and they would probably be greatly extended in various parts of the Metropolis. When an attempt was being made to throw part of the cost of lighting the staircases to them, which should be borne by the owners, whether private individuals or public companies, so dangerous

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

a precedent should be resisted. Whatever was required to be done to make these staircases decent and respectable at night should be done at the expense of the owners.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "as amended, be now considered," in order to add the words,

"Re-committed to the former Committee in respect of Clause 5 (Lighting common staircases, &c.)"—(*Mr. Howell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'as amended, be now considered,' stand part of the Question."

MR. CODDINGTON (Blackburn) said, that when this clause was before the Committee upstairs it was most carefully considered. Many alterations were made in it, the original proposal having been that the whole expenses of lighting these common staircases should be thrown on the property owners. The Committee, of which he was Chairman, took the view, however, that if it were desired that these staircases should be lighted, they would be lighted for the public convenience, and that it seemed manifestly unfair, therefore, to impose upon the owners the entire cost of lighting. The evidence showed that an enormous number of people lived in industrial dwellings, and it was clear that the occupants would be injured if the owners were called upon to bear the whole cost of lighting. A compromise was therefore arrived at, by which one-half the cost was imposed upon the owners and one-half upon the Vestries, powers being given to the Vestries to say whether the staircases should be lighted or not. The evidence given before the Committee showed that in some instances the street lamps were so situated as to sufficiently light the staircases, and that was why it was left to the Local Authority to say whether or not special lights should be provided. Had the hon. Member for Bethnal Green been in the Committee Room he would have seen what anxiety was displayed by the Committee in regard to this matter, and he would not have adopted the course he had taken that day.

SIR L. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland), as a Member of the Committee, said, he and his Colleagues were quite unanimous in the decision they came to upon that clause. These common staircases were practically part of the street. It was desirable that they should be adequately lighted—as a fact, they were lighted up for a portion of the evening, and it was held to be necessary on police grounds that the lighting should be continued throughout the night in the same way as streets were lighted. Inasmuch as the Local Authorities were to have the power of insisting on this extended lighting, it was felt to be only fair to the property owners, who did not deem it necessary, in the interests of the occupiers, to keep the gas alight for so many hours, that the whole of the increased expense should not fall upon them. The decision that the Local Authority should pay half the cost of lighting the staircases was, under the circumstances, a very fair one, and he therefore joined the hon. Member for Blackburn, the Chairman of the Committee, in resisting the Motion of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green.

COLONEL LOYD (Chatham) objected to the proposal to send the Bill back to the Committee. It would involve a waste of time, as they had already carefully considered this question, and had unanimously decided to divide the cost of lighting the staircases between the owners and the Local Authority. As the result of a census among the occupiers of these blocks, it was ascertained that only 3 per cent. wished the staircases to be lit up at night. Surely, then, if the Public Authorities were anxious to have them lighted longer they ought to bear some portion of the cost. Hence the compromise which was arrived at by the Committee, before which £3,500,000 worth of property was represented, and it did not seem to him that the House ought to entertain the suggestion that the Committee should be asked to reconsider the proposal.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, it was always difficult, especially when one had had no opportunity of either hearing or seeing the evidence given by a Committee, to controvert the position taken up by the Members; but looking at this question on general grounds, and knowing, as he did, a great deal about the locality, he was sure the evidence was of such a nature as to convince the Committee that something was required to be done in the matter of lighting the staircases. But it was a rather strong order for the Committee to assume that this was simply a matter of public convenience—in the ordinary acceptance of the term, as applied to the question of street lighting. Surely if the persons who erected these blocks created a public inconvenience by putting out the lights at a given hour, there was nothing unjust in calling upon them to make such arrangements as would avoid that public inconvenience. In that part of London which he represented there were large numbers of these blocks, and there was a very strong feeling in favour of the staircases being lighted, but he could not see why the small householder and small shopkeeper, who already paid heavily for lighting the thoroughfares, should have an extra charge thrown upon them in order to put an end to a public inconvenience caused by the action of private owners. That was the crux of the situation, and he submitted that if the owners of these dwellings desired to maintain the reputation hitherto borne by them they should pay the expense of providing the necessary lighting. He was told that under the Burgh and Police (Scotland) Act owners of such properties were called upon to provide a proper amount of lighting, although an exception was made in the case of the City of Glasgow, where the Local Authorities contributed something. But was not that exception due to the fact that the Glasgow Authorities had control over their own gas supply, and therefore felt themselves to be able to deal generously with their own people out of that which was common property? In London the case was very different, for there it was felt they were already paying £500,000 annually in excess of what they ought to pay for their gas supply. He hoped the House would seriously consider this question, and would bear in mind that the lighting of the staircases would be of great advantage to the occupants of the blocks, who were terribly inconvenienced at the present time by the niggardly proceedings of Companies owning the properties. Although this class of workmen's dwellings was not his ideal of what the working man's home should be, they could not deny that the blocks were a necessity in the present conditions of London life, and the proper lighting of them would be very beneficial to the residents in them.

**Mr. J. STUART** (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, the circumstances in which the House was placed were a little difficult. The London County Council were responsible for the proposal that the staircases should be lighted, and that the owners of the property should pay the cost. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green now asked that that proposal should be given effect to, but the Committee before which the Bill went had after careful investigation decided that the Lighting Authority should have the power of regulating the lighting of these staircases, and that it should in consequence bear half the cost. It seemed to him it would be rather difficult to refer the matter back to the Committee. It was rather a question for the House to determine, and he should not press his Motion, but that he should avail himself of the subsequent opportunity of raising the issue by moving to strike out the clause.

**Mr. RENSHAW** (Renfrew, W.), as a Member of the Committee, wished to say a word as to their decision. The Committee were absolutely unanimous in thinking that the proposals in the Bill were of a somewhat stringent character, and they felt that the very considerable expense that would be caused to owners and occupiers would be more than was justified. It was proposed to work these lighting provisions through the Vestries concerned, and it appeared that those Vestries had not been very largely consulted, and there was no evidence before the Committee to show that there was any great wish on their part that the duty should be put upon them. The evidence showed that the inhabitants and proprietors of these flats did not desire them to be lighted after 11 o'clock. They thought that if the lights were kept up after 11 o'clock it would be undesirable in the interests of quietness. The Committee came to the conclusion that the initiative should be left to the Lighting Authority. The responsibility would rest with the Vestries, and they would have to exercise their own discretion as to putting their powers in force. The Committee felt that as the arrangement was as much for the convenience of the police as of the inhabitants of the blocks the cost should be divided.

**The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central) said, that after the strong and unanimous expression of opinion on the part of the Members of the Committee he thought it would be useless to refer the matter back to them, as it was obvious they would stand by the decision at which they had already arrived. As the Vestries had not had an opportunity of considering this matter he would suggest that the Motion be withdrawn and the Bill be postponed a short time, so that the hon. Member could take another opportunity of raising a Debate on a point as to which in the absence of evidence he himself should be sorry to express an opinion.

MR. HOWELL : If the House desires I will take that course, and will raise the question on a future occasion.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate adjourned till Tuesday, 22nd May.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### UNIFORMS BILL.—(No. 12.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. H. R. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.) said, the Bill of which he had to move the Second Reading was a non-contentious measure. Its object was to regulate and restrict the wearing of uniforms, in view of the practice, objectionable to both officers and men of both Services, that had grown up of clothing sandwich-men in uniforms or colourable imitations of uniforms. Uniforms were also used for fraudulent purposes. In a breach of promise case which he read the other day the defendant, a clerk, knowing the effect a military uniform had on the fair sex, approached the lady in an officer's uniform. He was accepted and broke his promise, and then came the action. Again, in the Chamber of Horrors there was an effigy of the murderer Deeming dressed in the uniform of an Indian cavalry regiment. When soldiers saw that sort of thing they were naturally disgusted. He could not help thinking, considering the splendid services rendered both by the Army and the Navy, that the honour of the uniform should be very jealously guarded. Why should tradesmen, for the purposes of advertisement, be allowed to go into the back streets to collect men to dress in Her Majesty's uniform: did that not destroy the honour of wearing a soldier's uniform? He believed that in all other countries it was illegal to wear colourable imitations of uniforms. In this country, beyond all others, the honour of the Queen's uniform ought to be most strictly guarded, because the Military Service was entirely voluntary. Even the War Office Authorities depended to a certain extent on the smartness of the military uniform, for did they not send their smartest men in uniform to Trafalgar Square to get recruits? Yet it was possible that those recruits, after seeing the recruiting sergeant, came face to face in the next street with some unfortunate sandwich-man dressed in uniform, but presenting a miserable spectacle. It was not only civilians who were deceived. It sometimes happened that officers themselves were taken in. An impostor in a purchased uniform had actually been entertained as an officer at a regimental mess. The object of this Bill was to prevent occurrences of that kind, and generally to maintain the dignity of Her Majesty's Service. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye), in seconding the Motion, said, that he was anxious that the House should not think that this was a measure claimed by soldiers and sailors who sought to have conferred on them some exceptional privilege. It was, in fact, promoted to relieve these men of a serious injustice, and to rid the country of a scandal which was not tolerated in any other part of the world. The scandal with which the Bill dealt was the wearing of the national uniforms without any sort of authority and with every circumstance of derision and degradation, mainly in the streets of London and the large towns by sandwich-men for advertising purposes, and also by vagrants and mountebanks of every degree. His hon. Friend (Mr. Farquharson) had cited some very extraordinary examples of the laxity of the existing law. He would especially call the attention of the House and of the Secretary of State for War to the commonest prevailing form of this evil—that of street advertisement. Not long ago a man distributed advertisements in the streets dressed in the full uniform of a Staff officer. Personally, he felt less sympathy for the Staff officers than for any other persons in the Army, as it was the bad example of the Head Quarters Staff of the Army in matters of uniform which had had so much to do with the fact that officers throughout the Army evaded wearing their own uniforms whenever they could do so. Still, the Staff officer was entitled to redress in a matter of this sort. Another case took place last year, when, for purposes of advertisement, there was a long string of men attired as bluejackets, and commanded or marshalled—to make the thing complete—by an individual dressed as a naval officer, this individual carrying a sword and wearing a cocked hat. Naval men had no redress against this evil. This year, opposite Charing Cross Railway Station, was to be seen a procession of men dressed as Royal Marine Light Infantry, with the pith helmet. He called the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty to the matter, and that right hon. Gentleman acted with more promptitude than he had ever secured from any other branch of the Services. The right hon. Gentleman succeeded, by moral pressure of some kind, in having this particular scandal immediately abated. The last case of the sort which he would cite showed that even Volunteers had a great deal to complain of in this matter. Last year a number of sandwich-men were dressed in the uniform of a corps of which everyone had heard favourably—the Artists' Rifles.' The Adjutant of the corps remonstrated. The contractor heard him with the greatest good temper and urbanity, and, in answer to his representations, clothed all his men in the uniform of another battalion. Of course, he could add to these examples indefinitely. In the country districts the commonest form of this abuse was for bands of musicians to appear adorned in military garb; their appearance, he believed, excited great enthusiasm in the villages. There could be no objection to bands wearing proper uniforms—proper prescribed uniforms, in the way they did in every other part of the world; but there was no reason why they should be allowed to wear the honourable and distinctive uniforms of particular regiments, and even badges which were supposed to have been conferred on those regiments as an exclusive privilege to reward gallant services which had been performed. He understood that some hon. Members thought that this question of the bands constituted a difficulty in regard to the Bill. But he could assure them most earnestly that they need not so regard the matter. Certainly, if there was a difficulty it could easily be removed. His hon. Friend was quite willing that they should insert in the saving clause of the Bill in Committee any word which would make the clause more distinct than it now was. It was true that a certain word was omitted from the saving clause — the word "jacket." It would, however, be quite possible to include that word, and thus the objection would be met. In country villages the evil had greatly increased in the last few years and was likely to increase there owing to the present War Office Regulations. The village shop now nearly always had a supply of these picturesque dresses for any purchaser who liked to wear them, and it was quite a common thing to find persons employed as waggoners or otherwise, or not employed at all, swaggering about in the costume of the Royal Artillery, Hussars, Dragoons, or other regiment. Stablemen might even be seen wearing two or three good-conduct-badges which had been purchased at the local store. It frequently happened that a lad who wished to buy one of these military tunics stipulated that it should have a sergeant's chevron or two or three good-conduct badges. He was sure that the House would wish to remedy an evil of this kind. As to the method which they should adopt—it was a curious fact that whenever the authorities hitherto had tried to deal with the matter they had appeared to do so in the most disingenuous manner possible. Instead of accepting the principle that this Bill sought to establish that it was dishonest for unauthorised persons to wear a uniform prescribed for a certain class of the community and for no other, the line which they had tried to take was simply to make it difficult to buy or to sell the uniforms. But, as a matter of fact, the latest Regulations made it more easy than ever for uniforms to be bought and sold. In 1875 the Public Stores Act was passed. If it had actually been the policy of the authorities to deal with the matter in the indirect and, as he called it, disingenuous manner, they missed a good opportunity then of doing so with comparative success. The Act was extremely rigid in its Regulations about the other articles with which the soldier was supplied. It prescribed that marking stores improperly with the broad arrow or other badge of the same kind, should constitute a misdemeanour which might be punished by imprisonment for two years. The offence of obliterating the Government mark was made a felony, with a possible punishment of seven years' penal servitude. In Clause 13 necessaries which might be supplied to soldiers, Militiamen, and Volunteers were expressly exempted from the operation of the Act. To show that this method of dealing with the evil was ineffectual, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that it did not deal with the case of condemned uniforms. Some time ago he purchased from a shop-window two uniforms—one of the Royal Marine Artillery and the other of the Royal Marine Light Infantry—paying for them 3s. 6d. each. The vendor said that he had a large supply of other patterns inside if he liked to look at them. He sent the two tunics to be examined at headquarters, and was informed that they bore the condemned mark, and that therefore no offence had been committed. It was evident, therefore, that this way of dealing with the question did not suffice. He might remind the right hon. Gentleman of a scarlet jacket of the Inniskillen Dragoons which he handed to him, and which proved after long investigation to be made by a private tailor, or at any rate never to have been issued by the proper authorities. It was clear that the present was not the method of meeting the difficulty. They naturally turned to the example of other countries. No other great Military Power, or, he would say, warlike Power, if hon. Gentlemen preferred the expression, tolerated this evil for a moment. It was recognised as having a most serious effect upon recruiting—upon the legitimate prestige of the Army. How could General Officers in high authority or the Secretary of State for War address the troops or the public on the subject of the honour of wearing Her Majesty's uniform when it was made to be no honour at all? With what consistency could they put in *The Gazette* that such and such an officer had the right on retirement to retain his rank and wear his uniform when he could give himself permission if he liked to appear to do both under any circumstances without consulting anyone or being subject to any punishment. In France, the offence with which the Bill dealt was punished with six months to two years' imprisonment, without the option of a fine. In Germany, the punishment was six weeks' imprisonment, or a fine of £7 10s. In Austria-Hungary and Italy there was a heavy fine, which went as high in the case of Italy as £40. He turned to the example afforded in the distant parts of the British Empire. By the Indian Penal Code, Clause 7, Section 140, it was provided that whoever, not being a soldier in the Military or Naval Service of the Queen, wore any garb, or carried any token resembling any garb or token used by such soldier, should be punished with imprisonment by the Administration for a term which might extend to three months, or by a fine which might extend to 500 rupees, or by both. But the framers of the Bill had not relied on Continental models, nor even copied the drastic but useful enactment of the Indian Government. The main enactment in the Bill now before the House was taken from a recent statute of the Colony of Victoria. And he must be allowed to remind any hon. Gentleman who thought that in this modest Bill some serious injury was meditated against the liberties of the people—of the Civil population—that that was not likely to be the case when the main enactment had proved acceptable to the wisdom of the Victorian Legislature. The Act to which he referred was called the Discipline and Defence Act, Victoria. Before sitting down he would appeal to the House to show a little extra indulgence to the soldiers and sailors, owing to the fact that they did not possess any votes. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, of course there were exceptions, but the great mass of the soldiers and sailors had not that influence on the House that other sections of the community possessed. He thought that it would be a sad thing if the bands of musicians, who, he believed, were asking some hon. Members not to accept the Bill—these bands, who were wearing uniforms intended for the Army or the Navy, were to be able to exercise such pressure on the Members of that House by the authority of their votes as to override the claims for redress of honest soldiers and sailors who did not possess political influence. He trusted that the House in its wisdom would accept the Second Reading of the Bill, and so do an important act of justice to the soldiers and the sailors in the Services.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. H. R. Farquharson.*)

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.) said, that as one of the comparatively limited number of Members on that side of the House who had been connected with the Military Service he wished to make his position in regard to the Bill quite clear. He allowed his name to be placed on the back of the Bill, because he was led to believe that its provisions would by no possibility give rise to controversial discussion. He himself was well known to hold strong views in favour of submitting national disputes to arbitration rather than settling them by war. He deplored the fact that in the present state of civilisation, and owing, moreover, to the fact that humanity is what it is, great defensive armaments had still to be maintained at tremendous expense, but under those circumstances it was their duty as custodians of the nation's purse to see that her Forces were maintained in a state of efficiency. He could place history under contribution to prove that the success of an Army was not due altogether to the power of its armament or to the genius of its General, but in a great measure it was attributable to its morals and to the discipline which prevailed among the troops. This was more than ever the case by reason of recent changes in tactics. What should be the first step of the Military Authorities when they took a man from the plough-tail? As a strong Radical, he of course sincerely wished that the landlords of this country were in such a state that it would be impossible to induce men to leave the plough-tail, but inasmuch as men were tempted to enter the Army everything should be done by the State to make a man who enlisted feel that when he put on the Queen's uniform he at once rose to a position superior to that of his late comrades at the plough. That sense of superiority which had been fostered during his service, perhaps in foreign countries and under great hardships, would be entirely dispelled, however, if on his return to his native village he saw some unkempt, round-shouldered man with shambling gait, masquerading about the town in the uniform which he had been taught to look at with respect. Hon. Members around him would doubtless regard all that as mere military sentiment, but he remembered reading a speech by Macaulay in which he described how a Captain Elliott when he found a certain number of his fellow-countrymen overwhelmed with disaster and despair raised their spirits by hoisting the British flag, which reminded them that they belonged to a nation unaccustomed to defeat or submission, and assured them that although they might be separated from home by great oceans and big continents, not a hair of their heads would be injured with impunity. It was such a sentiment as that which the British soldier felt for his uniform, and he could only say that if he saw anyone masquerading in his uniform he should regard that as *une mauvaise plaisanterie.* Every Member of that House had a right to affix two letters after his name, and he believed most of them guarded that right jealously, as a mark that, in the opinion of their constituents, they were fitting persons to be their Representatives in the Legislative Council of the nation, and that they would feel justly aggrieved if the distinctiveness of the mark were lost sight of. For these reasons, and because he desired to prevent military uniforms being degraded, he should most certainly support the Bill.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he had listened with great pleasure to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for West Newington, and especially to his references to the power of the British flag, which he would like to see more freely displayed in Ireland. But he was inclined to oppose the Bill, because it would bear harshly upon the members of certain bands of the Orange Societies. He did not think that the loyal men who belonged to bands of this sort should be subject to penalties because they put on uniforms, and in that way expressed their desire to maintain the honour of the Crown and the integrity of the Empire. No one for a moment would say that the honour of the Army and Navy was not dear to Irish loyalists, and he hoped the House would pause before placing a limit on the liberty of these loyal men to wear colourable imitations of military uniforms.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) said, his object in supporting the Bill was that the wearing of uniforms unworthily by unworthy persons acted as a direct bar and deterrent to the recruiting of respectable young men whom we were inviting to enter the ranks of the Army. He quite recognised the utility of bands, especially at Parliamentary elections, but in this matter of uniform he thought the House should consider the desire of the whole British Army, and not study the wishes of a few Members who looked to these bands for solace in the hour of defeat, moral or practical. He had never understood the dislike of officers and non-commissioned officers of the Army to wearing their uniforms when not on duty; but it might be due to some extent to the fact that advertising scarecrows in the streets could wear uniforms or portions of uniforms and thus bring them into ridicule. Certain it was that the feeling against uniforms pervaded the Army, and it also weighed with civilians. The other day a subaltern committed a breach of military discipline which eventually had to be reported to the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief; and the Duke of Cambridge, by way of expressing his displeasure with the offence which the officer had committed, ordered that he was to wear his uniform for a specified time. Consider the absurdity of ordering a man to wear as a badge of disgrace and as a mark of the displeasure of the Commander-in-Chief the uniform which he ought to consider it an honour and a pleasure to wear. He would relate a circumstance which happened not long ago which would show how the wearing of the military uniform was looked on by civilians. A non-commissioned officer had to travel from Kingstown to Holyhead, and the officers of the London and North Western Railway considered that in his uniform he was not fit to travel by one of their mail steamers, and so they ordered him off the passenger steamer and made him travel by a cargo-boat. ["Oh!"] Now, this officer was necessarily a man of education and character, a worthy man and a good soldier. He was as respectable and as good a man as any Member of the House. As he had occasionally informed the House, he was an agricultural Member, and from his knowledge of agricultural districts he was able to say that military uniforms were often to be seen waving in the breeze to scare the birds away. What was of importance was that the improper wearing of uniforms was a distinct bar and deterrent to recruiting. When a young fellow from the County of Essex went to Trafalgar Square where recruiting sergeants congregated, having made up his mind to take the shilling, and there saw a procession of men clothed in parts of military uniforms and carrying advertisements of somebody's soap or somebody's pills, one was not so desirous of wearing the uniform himself. He hoped the Secretary for War might be induced to take a favourable view of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The short discussion to which we have listened comes upon us, I am sure, with a refreshing influence in the middle of an arid waste of political Debate. We have had placed before us an interesting subject in itself, and we have listened to a number of anecdotes and incidents which cannot fail to have moved and interested the House. On the general question which is raised by the Bill there cannot be two opinions within the walls of the House. We are all concerned in preventing any public scandal or abuse such as in some cases has been proved to have occurred; we are all concerned in maintaining the dignity of Her Majesty's uniform and in preventing anything that would tend to degrade it. I confess that I do not take the extreme view which has been adopted by some of my hon. and gallant Friends who have spoken. I have been so unfortunate, perhaps, as never to have met these rows of sandwich-men in the street. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] Well, I have not had the advantage of the hon. Gentleman opposite who says "Oh!" I can only say most sincerely that I have not seen them, and, therefore, although I have no doubt they exist, they are not as ubiquitous as is supposed. If I were disposed to offer myself as a recruit, I should not be deterred by the vision of these sandwich-men. I object to seeing sandwich-men attired in any preposterous dress. I hold it to be a public scandal that it should be allowed by the police that rows of men should be compelled, in order to earn their bread, to parade the streets in dresses which degrade them and in dresses which are likely to bring ridicule upon certain classes of Her Majesty's subjects. I will quote to the House a very extreme instance. I remember that some years ago there were sandwich-men who went about in the dress of convicts—I think with chains and with all sorts of horrors attached to them. Well, convicts are not a class of the community who are altogether deserving of our pious respect, but still it is most improper and, in fact, most horrible that anything should be done to degrade them still further than is necessary for the punishment they have to undergo. I take that as an extreme case. If they were all dressed as clergymen or in any other distinctive dress I should think it equally improper and revolting to the sense of public decency. I should have thought that exhibitions of that kind might have been met by Police Regulations, which would have prevented the necessity of legislation on the subject. As to an occasional Field Marshal or Staff officer being seen in some masquerading Guy Fawkes procession, I do not attach very much importance to that, improper and indecent as it is. But when we are told that the wearing of uniforms by persons who are not entitled to wear them is prohibited in other countries, and that we should take those countries as our model, we must remember what the state of the law is in those countries. According to the Penal Codes of France and Germany, not only is it against the law for a man to wear a uniform he is not entitled to wear, but it is illegal for a citizen to change his name or in any way to interfere with what in France they call *l'état civile.* That is a state of the law which does not exist in this country, and I believe that if we introduced anything of the kind it would be an entire innovation in the law of this country. In our Dependency of India a distinction is made, as it is with reference to police constables in this country, to this extent—that heavy penalties are imposed where a man assumes a uniform of any kind for the purpose of passing himself off as having a right to wear it. The mere wearing of a uniform at a fancy dress ball or at private theatricals or upon any occasion of that kind surely comes within a different category. If a burglar dresses himself as a constable or as a post office official for the purpose of obtaining entrance to a house under false pretences he commits another sort of offence altogether. This Bill as it stands would, as I have already stated, introduce an entire innovation into the law, not merely in reference to this particular point, which is, after all, a small one, but with regard to the whole attitude of the law towards private individuals. It has been put to me as strongly as this: that there is nothing in the English law to prevent any person—let the House imagine the enormity of this conduct—going out to dinner in the official dress of a Cabinet Minister, or wearing the insignia of the Bath; there is nothing in the law to prevent any person from placing a ducal coronet on his carriage, or on his wheelbarrow, and there is no express enactment prohibiting a crossing-sweeper from plying his avocation in full episcopal costume, although if by doing so he caused a great public scandal or caused an obstruction in the streets he would probably find himself amenable to the Common Law.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman who gives that opinion?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Really if the hon. Gentleman asks me to state who is the particular lawyer who supplies me with the information I use in the course of my speech he might as well ask who supplied me with the arguments I am using or the opinions I express. The grossest case is that of men who are employed by way of advertisement in the street; and there comes in the point of public scandal. I cannot help thinking that much less ambitious means might be adopted than those of an Act of Parliament for the purpose of preventing such an abuse. We get into very vague quarters when we deal with "uniforms," and especially when we come to speak of "colourable imitations." My hon. Friend opposite, in the interests of Ulster—where, I suppose, they are very fond of colours and uniforms, and bands and noise generally—has pleaded that bands should be allowed to go about in his country. That point was alluded to by another of the Members opposite, who pointed out that bands go about in England, and Scotland also. If bands are to be allowed to dress themselves in some sort of gay uniform, but are to be prohibited from using any uniform which can be said to be a colourable imitation of any uniform in the Service, those who know how diverse those uniforms are will see how difficult it will be for them to carry out the prohibition. There is a further point which I would urge. This Bill applies to the Navy as well as to the Army. There is a very great risk that by a sweeping enactment of this kind you will do very much more than you really intend to. There is to be no colourable imitation of the naval uniform. How, then, are the officers and stewards and men on board all our great passenger ships to be treated? There is not one of them who would not come within the category of those who wear colourable imitations of the naval uniform. Well, having the great desire to assist hon. Members who are endeavouring to prevent any such scandalous degradation of the uniform as has been referred to, and sympathising with them in their objects, I cannot help thinking that the Bill appears to be too strong for the object it seeks to accomplish, and I, therefore, shall hardly be disposed to support it actively—at all events, in its present condition. At the same time, I do think that the matter requires looking into, and it is precisely one of those semi-military and semi-civilian questions which deal with a territory in which the civil and military populations and their views, prejudices, and interests overlap, and one of those questions which the House of Commons is better able than any other body to deal with. Therefore, what I should suggest to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill is that either the Second Reading should be allowed to be taken *pro formâ*, or that the Bill should be withdrawn with a view to our having an inquiry by a Select Committee. I should raise no objection to the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, but perhaps it would be better to have a Select Committee on the subject without referring the Bill to it. I think that a well-constituted Committee might be able to guard the House against the dangers which I have ventured to point out, and at the same time to arrive at some way of dealing with a scandal which gives offence not only to many soldiers and sailors, but also to many civilians. I am not one of those who take an extreme view of the case. I do not believe that, after all, there is any great injurious effect created by the clothing worn by sandwich-men. I am not aware that in any other parts of the country than the West of London sandwich-men go about in military uniform; and when the hon. Gentleman opposite suggests that the reason why officers do not like to wear their uniform except when on duty, is that they see these men wearing it about the streets, I think that only shows how far a natural feeling on the subject may lead a man of a somewhat enthusiastic turn of mind. As to the wearing of the uniform, I repeat now what I have already said, that I should be glad to take any step in my power to further impose the obligation upon officers to wear their uniform. But certainly what is before us now does not concern the uniform of the officers as much as the uniform of the private soldier, and I think that the best way of accomplishing the object my hon. Friend has in view would be to have a Select Committee.

SIR G. CHESNEY (Oxford) said, that all who were interested in the proposal embodied in the Bill would recognise the sympathetic way in which it had been met by the right hon. Gentleman, but it was for the House to consider whether the arguments the right hon. Gentleman had adduced were sufficient to lead the House to refuse to read the Bill a second time. The right hon. Gentleman, having expressed full sympathy with the object of the Bill, had gone out of his way to suggest various difficulties which appeared to him to arise out of a very simple and small measure. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Bill would apparently strike at a very harmless institution of private theatricals or at fancy balls where the uniform might be worn. In those cases, however, the object of wearing the uniform was not to discredit it, and, generally speaking, a person who wore a uniform at a theatrical entertainment was the first or second hero of the piece. To the extent to which the practice of wearing the uniform for advertising purposes was carried, it would be hard to deny that it must have an injurious effect, and, if so, why not, in the interests of the Army, stop it? The point at issue was a small one. The Army was not sufficiently attractive as it stood. Whatever was said about the satisfactory state of recruiting, year by year the Government had the greatest possible difficulty in obtaining a full supply of thoroughly efficient recruits. Almost every second year the standard had to be reduced, or some other measure had to be adopted in order to obtain a full supply of recruits.

That being so, it was surely important to do everything that could be done, without spending money needlessly, to make the Army attractive, and to put a stop to anything that would make it unattractive. If the Bill were passed it would be possible, the right hon. Gentleman said, to proceed against almost every steward on an Atlantic liner for wearing a colourable imitation of Her Majesty's uniform. The object of the Bill, however, was to stop this inappropriate way of advertising, and no one could seriously suppose that, in consequence of its passage, anyone would ever take proceedings against the stewards of the Mercantile Marine. If the Bill were read a second time a Select Committee could make any alterations necessary to remove from it anything that appeared to be objectionable, although he must say that, in his opinion, a more harmless and unobjectionable Bill was never brought forward. No one could suppose that if this Bill were passed the civil status of the population would be interfered with in the smallest possible way. The right hon. Gentleman had said that in other countries, where trifling with uniforms would not be allowed, the status of the citizen was guarded in a variety of other ways. But what had that to do with the question? The fact that a man in France could not change his name without the permission of the Legal Authorities surely had nothing to do with the question whether sandwich-men should be allowed to go about the streets wearing, not "colourable imitations" of the uniform, but the real uniform which had absolutely been worn by men in Her Majesty's Army. Something was being done every year to raise the status of the soldier. The Army now represented as respectable, well-conducted, and honourable a body of citizens as could be found anywhere in the country, and its moral qualities were improving and advancing from day to day. If it were the case that this practice of throwing ridicule on the uniform did any damage whatever to the cause of recruiting and to the character of the Army, he would strongly appeal to hon. Gentlemen to express their opinion in the matter by going to a Second Reading. If the right hon. Gentleman would allow the Bill to go to a Select Committee no doubt it could be modified under his guidance, and it would then have the effect of putting a stop to what was really a nuisance. The right hon. Gentleman thought it desirable that officers should wear their uniform. Well, they had not the slightest objection provided they got a uniform they could really wear. But so long as the officers' full dress was so constructed by Regulation that there was not even room to stow away a cigarette or a pocket-handkerchief, they would be averse to pursuing their avocations in that guise, however splendid and becoming it might be. The remedy was in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman himself.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he hoped the House would accept the offer of the Secretary for War and send the Bill after its Second Reading to a Select Committee, where, he believed, many of the objections that had been put forward would be removed. The rejection of the Second Reading would be an encouragement to those who now employed these sandwich-men, while the affirmation of its principle, even if the Bill did not proceed further this Session, would give these men a first warning of which they would probably take considerable notice, and it would have a great moral effect.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he wished the Secretary for War to know that the matter could not be dealt with solely and entirely by Police Regulation. In the first place, if it were so dealt with, the Government, he thought, could not act directly except with the Metropolis alone; and even in London legislation would be required. When he was at the Home Office the case arose of a number of sandwich-men being sent out dressed in the uniform of the Old Guard of Napoleon. It was thought desirable to stop this, and it was stopped by private representations; but there was no legal power to make the employer of these sandwich-men desist from the objectionable form of advertisement. He would advise his hon. Friend to take the Second Reading now that he could get it, though he thought the Secretary of State for War had argued the question too much from a civil point of view and too little on the ground that the Bill was designed in the interests of the Army.

Captain BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal) said, that if this was a matter which could really be altered by Police

Regulations, the argument of the Secretary for War that it brought about a great innovation of the law seemed to be rather unreasonable. But if the argument was a reasonable one, the best means of altering the present state of the case would evidently be by Act of Parliament rather than by suggestions made to the police. Since short service had come into operation it had been generally accepted by both the Military and the Civil Authorities that everything should be done to popularise the Army, and to make the wearing of the Queen's uniform dignified and free from any suspicion of contempt, in the same way as it was in France, Germany, Italy, and other countries. For his own part, he did not think the argument as to sandwich-men and others would have any actual influence on recruiting. They constantly heard complaints of the soldier in uniform being refused admission into music halls and restaurants. There had been a great outcry on the subject, and the Secretary for War invariably sympathised with the complaints, but, at the same time, nothing was done. This Bill simply attempted to carry out the idea that Her Majesty's uniform should be a dress which the soldier should be brought up to consider an honour to wear, and that he ought never to have to undergo the indignity of its being brought into disrepute in the streets or in other places. There was certainly a strong feeling among officers of the Army on this subject, and he hoped the reasons which had been given in favour of the Bill would be acknowledged, and the measure adopted. There was another point which had not yet been alluded to. Up to about a year ago the British soldier had to return his worn-out uniform into stores, but new Regulations had been issued under which the soldier was permitted to sell his old uniform or to dispose of it in any way he liked under certain conditions. The consequence was that, under the new Regulations, there would be more old uniforms at the disposal of private soldiers, and a greater temptation to sell them to the first comer. In these circumstances, he thought it was very desirable that some measure should be taken—either by Act of Parliament, or by some new Police Regulations, if the Secretary for War saw fit—to prevent the scandal and disgrace to which the uniform had been subjected for so many years. He certainly hoped the Bill would obtain a Second Reading, and that the Secretary for War would take the necessary steps in the matter.

**Mr. BENNETT** (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) said that, when he put down his Amendment to oppose the Bill, he took a strong view that the measure was one which would tend to a serious interference with the liberty of the subject; and he therefore felt it his duty to place his Amendment on the Paper. He was very glad that the Secretary for War had put the matter so ably and satisfactorily before the House; and when the right hon. Gentleman suggested that the matter should be referred to a Select Committee, he (Mr. Bennett) confessed that his mind was very largely satisfied, and in view of the preciousness of the time of this House, he should decline now to move his Amendment, and leave the matter as it now was before them.

**Mr. H. R. FARQUHARSON** thanked the hon. Member for Gainsborough for abstaining from moving his Amendment.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Select Committee.

## OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.—(No. 14.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

*__Mr. STRACHEY__ (Somerset, S.), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, he did not think it necessary for him to occupy the time of the House very long, as this was the same Bill which he brought in last Session, and which met with approval on both sides of the House. At that time the Bill was one which was of local importance only, and which was generally supported in the County of Somerset, a portion of which he had the honour to represent; but he thought that this Session he might claim that it was of national importance, as the Friendly Societies throughout the country were unanimously in favour of it. The Bill was a short one, containing practically only one clause, and it would, perhaps, save time if he proceeded to read the Operative Clause of the Bill, which was as follows:—

> "Notwithstanding any Orders or Regulations of the Poor Law Commissioners or the Local

Government Board under and by virtue of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, or of any Act amending the said Act, it shall be lawful for any Board of Guardians to grant relief out of the poor rates to any person otherwise entitled to such relief, notwithstanding that the said person shall, by reason of his membership of a Friendly Society be in receipt of any sum, and that in estimating the amount of the relief that shall be granted to such person, being a member of a Friendly Society as aforesaid, the Board of Guardians need not take into consideration the amount which may be received by him from such Friendly Society."

What did that clause do? It only gave power to Boards of Guardians to do legally what they were constantly in the habit of doing now illegally. In the case of sickness the amount given by some Friendly Societies to a member was very small, only amounting to some 4s. or 5s. a week, which made it necessary for a man to go to the Board of Guardians in order to get it supplemented, and what he asked the House to do was to make it legal for the Boards to give outdoor relief in addition to and without taking into consideration the whole amount a man received from his Society. He had been told that there was some doubt upon this matter, that the Local Government Board had not settled the question, and that Guardians might give relief in these cases without taking into account the amount received from a Friendly Society. That was not the case, however, for the Local Government Board in a letter to the hon. Member for the Wells Division of Somerset distinctly laid it down that the Guardians must take into account any contributions the applicant was receiving from a Friendly Society and then add no more to that amount than they held to be necessary to deal with the destitution of a person similarly circumstanced who was not a member of a Friendly Society. Again, in the 10th edition of Glen's Poor Law Orders, it was laid down that whatever the Guardians might do in giving relief beyond the actual necessities of the case they would by so doing have acted illegally, and would be liable to be surcharged. This Bill last year received a good deal of support from various parts of the House, but it was only locally supported outside, principally, as he had already intimated, in the County of Somerset. This year, however, not only had it got that local support, but they might claim for it national support, and in addition to being backed by Somerset Members it also had upon it the names of an hon. Member from Wiltshire and of London, the Metropolitan Members being the hon. Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) and the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell). He had had a letter sent him from Mr. Cleveland, the Secretary to the National Independent Order of Oddfellows, giving the Bill the most hearty support. This letter was dated April 5, 1894, and was as follows :—

"Dear Sir,—I beg to hand you a copy of the resolution passed at the Conference of Friendly Societies held in London on the 21st ultimo, at which were represented 2,509,876 adult members possessing capital amounting to £18,145,826."

RESOLUTION.

"That all Friendly Societies should support in the most earnest manner the Bill introduced into Parliament by Mr. Strachey, empowering Poor Law Guardians to grant outdoor relief to members of Friendly Societies irrespective of amounts receivable from Sick Societies."

He thought, after reading such a letter, he need not urge any argument as to Friendly Societies being unanimously in favour of this principle. The Friendly Society which brought the question before the Conference, the Hearts of Oak, brought it not only on the question of sick allowance, in regard to which he believed that Society was able to be generous, but they supported it as much as anything upon the principle that they were seriously affected by the present state of the law as regarded old age pensions. The Hearts of Oak had adopted the principle of old age pensions, by which after a certain age and after paying certain contributions its members were allowed a pension of 4s. a week. The Hearts of Oak Society considered it was a great hardship that one of their members who by his own exertions and thrift had secured for himself in his old age a pension of 4s. a week, if compelled by necessity to apply for outdoor relief, should at once be met with the statement by the Guardians that they should deduct the whole of the amount he had earned by his industry for his old age, from any assistance they thought he ought to receive according to the necessities of his case. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India, who was then President of the Local Government Board, said that from the Government point of view there was no objection to this Bill, but he argued that there ought to be delay. The right hon. Gentleman's plea was that this question had been referred to the Commission on the Aged Poor; that Commission had sat 36 times, and he expected it would report in ample time next year for legislation. The Secretary of State for India, as reported in *Hansard*, made that statement on the 14th of June, 1893. But the Commission on the Aged Poor had not reported yet, and he had failed to learn from any possible source when it was likely to do so. Even if they were told it was likely to report soon he did not think that that would be a ground for delaying the passage of the Bill through this House, because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, on a later date than that—namely, on the 26th of August, 1893, writing to him (Mr. Strachey), said the Commission had concluded its sittings, and he expected it would report in October, 1893, so that there would be ample time for legislation in the following Session. Since that time five months had passed; there had still been no Report, and all this time injustice was being done to members of Friendly Societies, and it was very hard they should be expected to wait in this indefinite sort of way. There was a great feeling among the members of Friendly Societies that the Government were trying to stave the matter off, and that they did not take sufficient interest in it. He did not think that was the case for a moment, but he thought the Government would be ill-advised if they were again to put this Bill off, or not do more than permit the Second Reading to be taken simply because of a hypothetical Report of this Commission. This matter was one that ought not to frighten the Local Government Board. Although the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board might express his sympathy with the Bill, he rather thought they should find the Local Government Board would object to it becoming law. He would point out, however, that it was not compulsory but permissive; and who, he should like to ask, would be better able to exercise a discretion and judge of the cases than the Boards of Guardians on the spot? They might be sure that the Guardians would not make this extra allowance in undeserving cases. The present state of the law was such as to be a direct discouragement of thrift. In counties like Somerset, and Wiltshire, and Dorset, and others in the West of England, where wages were low, members of Friendly Societies were only able to subscribe such an amount as would enable them to get, perhaps, for three months 5s. a week, and then they would be cut down to a smaller sum. If a man, through sickness or accident, became incapacitated from following his employment, it was perfectly ridiculous to expect him to support himself and family on 5s. a week; and therefore a man was inclined to ask himself if it was worth while joining Friendly Societies when he found that the man who did not join was in as good a position as he before the Board of Guardians in the matter of relief. The man who did not join would get, say, 10s. a week from the Guardians, whilst the man who did join a Friendly Society would only get 5s., and thus was penalised to this extent for having throughout his life practised the utmost self-denial in order that he might make some provision for sickness. It could not be urged that this Bill would discourage thrift, because its tendency would be to directly encourage it, whereas the present state of the law discouraged thrift. If the President of the Local Government Board could see his way to support the Bill entirely it would not only be a source of satisfaction to the great Friendly Societies who supported it, but it would be a great inducement to men to join Friendly Societies and also to go in for old age pensions, as in the Hearts of Oak Society, which would be an important step in the right direction. If he resisted this Bill the Local Government Board would be throwing a direct impediment in the way of men making provision for old age pensions. He hoped, therefore, the Bill would meet with the favourable consideration of the President of the Local Government Board, and he begged to move that it be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Strachey.*)

COLONEL GUNTER (York, W.R., Barkstone Ash) supported the Bill. Speaking from an experience of more than 20 years as the Chairman of a large Board of Guardians in Yorkshire, he said he had found practical difficulty in dealing with this very subject in a way which would be to the advantage of the men themselves and also to the ratepayers. When a man became incapacitated through illness he very often required nutriment and nourishment to bring him round more than anything else, and if he had a family, even if he got 10s. a week from a Friendly Society to which he belonged, he might require another 10s. from the Board of Guardians to put him right. There was no doubt it was far cheaper to the ratepayers to give a man 10s. a week for a month than dole out relief to him at the rate of 2s. 6d. a week for three months. The real object of the Bill was to bring into practical working a better system, and he hoped that not only would the House give it a Second Reading, but also pass it into a law. If they took away the desire of men to belong to Friendly Societies they would take away from them a great boon which they obtained by their membership. If a man who did not belong to a Society fell ill he did not send for a doctor, in the hope that the illness was slight and would soon pass over him. The result was that he often got worse and came to the Guardians in such a low physical state that it was a considerable time before he was restored to health. But if a man belonged to one of these thrift Societies the doctor came at once to see him, ordered him proper nutriment and nourishment, and if the 10s. a week he might receive from a Friendly Society was not enough to support him and his family, he ought to be able to come to the Board of Guardians, who, if they were sensible people, would allow him another 10s., which would bring him round far quicker than if a small stipend were doled out to him barely sufficient to keep body and soul together. He hoped the Bill would pass the Second Reading and subsequent stages, and become law.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) sincerely hoped the President of the Local Government Board would not only support the measure, but do his utmost to help it to pass into law. He trusted the Local Government Board officials would not interpose in the matter at all, for surely it did not require a Royal Commission on Aged Poor to tell them what to do. It was the duty of the Government and of legislation to foster thriftiness and providence in every possible way. The law at present was a direct incentive against thrift, and irrespective of what any Royal Commission might say, it was the duty of the Government to induce men to do what they possibly could to join Friendly Societies so that they might help themselves and free themselves from the degradation of becoming paupers if they were incapacitated for work. This measure did not fetter the action of Boards of Guardians in any way. In two months more they hoped to have reformed Boards of Guardians, and he hoped that the President of the Local Government Board would trust such Boards and say they might decide for themselves whether a man was deserving of more humane treatment because he belonged to a Friendly Society. Under the present system it almost seemed that a man who had been a sober, industrious, and provident citizen and joined a Friendly Society was not as worthy of proper treatment as the thriftless and improvident. They had heard a great deal about the classification of indoor paupers. If it were necessary to classify indoor paupers it ought to be necessary to classify those who received outdoor relief. Any measure like this, which would tend to the more humane treatment of those who had helped themselves, was deserving of every support, and he hoped this Bill would therefore receive the support of the President of the Local Government Board and would soon become law.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) thought it very gratifying to find a consensus of opinion on both sides of the House in favour of this very small but very important measure. The law as it stood was rigid in the extreme, and it was at the present time an absolute disqualification for any consideration on the part of persons in distress if they were in receipt of money from Friendly Societies. This Bill was intended to do away with this anomaly, and to do away with the disqualification that because a man had endeavoured in some way or other to provide for himself—it was true not sufficiently for all his wants—he should be in a worse position than his neighbour who had done nothing for himself. He had sat for many years on a Board of Guardians, and he had always felt the system had been one of encouragement of persons who came before the Board to try and prove they had done nothing. When persons asked for relief they did not try to show that they had made every effort for themselves, but their great aim was to show they had done nothing and had got nothing. That seemed to him to be the wrong way of looking at it. The aim of relief should be to give relief to a man when he was in distress in proportion as he deserved it by his previous life. If he had spent a bad, thriftless, extravagant, or dissipated life he should be relieved, but only under drastic conditions. Where a man had done his best, however, to provide for himself and his family, he ought not to be put in a worse, but in a better, position than his thriftless and improvident neighbour when he came before the Guardians for relief. He advocated it many years ago when he tried to have outdoor relief placed on a basis of thrift. He believed that was the only way, or one of the most efficacious ways, of attacking that very serious evil. They should take count of human nature as it was; and when they thought that a man earning a constant wage should, when young, join a Friendly Society, they should, at the same time, consider that the man would naturally calculate what were the advantages to be gained from joining a Friendly Society, and when he saw that he was really worse off by joining, he would argue, "It is of no use my joining this Society, because if I should ever come to trouble I should be in a worse position than if I had not joined the Society." He believed that if the Bill were passed it would have the effect of lessening the number of applications for relief, for with the existing discouragement against joining Friendly Societies removed, numbers of people would crowd into those Societies, and thereby contract habits of thrift that would place them above the necessity of having to go for help to the rates in time of sickness and distress. He had, therefore, no hesitation in saying that the present state of the law was a great discouragement to thrift, and surely that was reason enough why it should be altered. He did not think that the question of old age pensions should be mixed up with this subject. It should be treated separately. This question, in his opinion, did not bear at all on the old age pension question, and he hoped the President of the Local Government Board would not run off with the measure on the ground that the Commission on Old Age Pensions had not yet reported. The Bill was not a compulsory measure. It left everything to the discretion of the Guardians, who were the only people who could know the merits of each case, and really he thought that if the Guardians considered that a man who had endeavoured to provide for himself by joining a Friendly Society was on that account deserving of assistance in a time of trouble, they should be allowed legally to give it to him instead of, as at present, winking at the law or setting the law at defiance. He was not a lax administrator of the Poor Law. On the contrary, he was a very rigid administrator, but he thought that if this Bill were passed it would tend to the cultivation of habits of thrift amongst the people, making the people more prosperous and, therefore, less liable to have recourse to Poor Law relief.

Mr. BARLOW (Somerset, Frome) said, that the Bill was heartily approved of not only in his own constituency, but all through the country. Since the Bill was printed, he had received a large number of communications—all expressing approval of the principle of the Bill—from various parts of the country. There seemed to be a prevailing impression that the present state of the law was a direct incentive to a neglect of thrift. That view was held by a large number of the working people, and it directly militated against the success of the Friendly Societies. The work of the Friendly Societies could be viewed only with favour by those who believed in teaching the agricultural population that they ought to lay up for a rainy day, and surely, then, everything that tended to interfere with the success of the Friendly Societies should be removed. This subject was one which he had had occasion to study, and he was certain that the passing of the Bill would be hailed as a measure not only of justice but good policy. He hoped, therefore, that the House would not only grant the Second Reading, but take measures to secure that the Bill became law during the present Session.

Mr. S. HOARE (Norwich) said, he was glad to join his voice to what seemed to be the general testimony of the House in favour of the Bill. The law at present actually made it a disadvantage to a man to belong to a Friendly Society, and if the House removed that anomaly, it would be doing a good work in the interest of thrift. It often happened that a member of a

Friendly Society required relief; and it was hard on that man, who had done his best to provide for a rainy day, that he could get no assistance from the rates, while his unthrifty neighbour had no difficulty whatever in getting relief. When they considered how enormously the rates were relieved by the operation of those Friendly Societies, they should encourage their extension in every way. But many people did not now join Friendly Societies, because they realised the fact that in times of trouble the thrifty man got no relief. He hoped the Bill would pass into law, as he believed it would be of great advantage to the great Friendly Societies, and would be only an act of justice to those who belonged to them.

*SIR J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) desired to add only a few words to the general expression of opinion in favour of the Bill. He wished to point out that the circumstances of the County of Durham were somewhat peculiar. The miners were almost all members of one large Provident Society, and the railway men were members of another. The Railway Companies and the mines paid one-half or three-quarters of the rates in some parishes, and yet railway men and miners were practically debarred from getting relief out of the rates. Boards of Guardians recognised that in times of difficulty a little help, in addition to the provision which a man had been able to make for himself, resulted ultimately in relieving the poor rate, for such help enabled him to get back to work the sooner and thus to support his family. The existing law really imposed a penalty upon thrift, for the man who was not a member of a Friendly Society and had no savings could get a much larger amount of relief than the man who was a member of one of these useful and excellent Societies. Boards of Guardians in Durham, knowing the hardship often inflicted by the existing law, and being unable to grant sufficient relief to a man in consequence of his being a member of a Society, frequently relieved him indirectly by assisting his wife or some other relative. He believed that the Bill would have the effect of saving rather than of increasing the rates, for it would encourage people to join Benefit Societies. It would be perfectly safe to leave the question of relief to the discretion of the Guardians who, in country districts—unlike the Guardians of large towns—were, as a rule, quite familiar with the merits of the cases brought before them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The interesting question raised by this measure was considered by the Local Government Board in 1870, when my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, was President of the Board. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Wells Division of Somerset had asked why Boards of Guardians were not justified in granting relief in such cases as are contemplated in the present measure without taking into consideration the amounts which the persons concerned may receive from the Societies with which they are connected. My right hon. Friend directed a letter to be written to the hon. Member for the Wells Division, in which I find the following paragraphs. First, as to whether Boards of Guardians were legally entitled to take the course suggested, the letter states:—

> "In answer to these precise questions as to the legal bearings of the case, I am directed to state that, in the opinion of the Board, the Guardians would not be justified, according to the strict law applicable to such cases, in giving to the widow in question any further relief than such an amount as would, together with the sum she was receiving from the Benefit Society, render the amount of her weekly income equal, and no more than equal, to that amount which the Guardians hold to be necessary to relieve the destitution of a person similarly circumstanced, but who has no other means of support."

The letter further states—

> "In the opinion of the Board, it would not be expedient to administer poor rates, which are levied from all classes down to those on the very verge of destitution, in such a manner as to cause them to be recognised by the working classes of the country as a provision substituted by the law of the land for that which, in the absence of such a system, they would be willing to provide for themselves and their families through the medium of Benefit Societies. The Board regard the prosperity and extension of these Benefit Societies as a matter of extreme importance, and would be anxious to encourage their establishment by all legitimate means. But the Board, as at present advised, believe that this encouragement could not safely be given by allowing the poor rates to be treated as a subsidiary fund. The Board cannot shut their eyes to the fact that the only safe basis on which the system of Benefit Societies can rest, under the present system of the legal right to relief, is, that they afford the means of providing, in times of distress or disability, a more eligible, respectable, and liberal maintenance than that supplied under the Poor Law, and that they should be still regarded as a

mode for avoiding the degradation of parish support, rather than as conferring a title by which a claim to such support may be established even beyond the line of actual destitution."

That was the opinion of the Local Government Board on the question in 1870. That letter was printed and circulated; but it does not appear to have been acted upon generally by Boards of Guardians; for in spite of this declaration of the Local Government Board, it has undoubtedly been the practice in the country to act in opposition to it. I believe I am right in saying that the vast majority of Boards of Guardians, when a case affecting a member of a Friendly Society is brought before them, do not limit their relief to the difference between the amount obtained from the Society and the amount which would be granted ordinarily in the shape of outdoor relief. The strict law is, therefore, not being carried out in most cases; in fact, the number of cases in which it is being carried out is extremely small. I do not find that the Local Government Board have ever taken any steps, beyond writing the letter to which I have referrĕd, to enforce the strict view of the law; nor have auditors ever surcharged any Board of Guardians for payments made to members of Friendly Societies. The question, then, arises whether it would not be wise to bring the law into harmony with what is the general practice. There may be opposite views taken on the subject. On the one side the strict economists may say it would discourage thrift to induce people to rely on the rates for relief in times of distress. But we have had to-day an expression of the opposite view from all parts of the House —namely, that the law as it at present stands really discourages thrift. For my own part, I hold this last view of the case. After careful consideration I have formed the opinion that the proposal contained in this measure may be adopted without any danger, and therefore I shall support the Motion for the Second Reading. But as the question has been under the consideration of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor, and is closely connected with the subject of old age pensions, I think it would be well to postpone the Committee stage until after the publication of the Report of the Commission—assuming, of course, that the Report will be issued within a reasonable time. Considering the fact that the Commission is now actually considering the Report, it would be only respectful to the Commission; and it would be expedient to wait, at all events for a short time, until we have the conclusions of the Commission before us.

Mr. HARRY SMITH (Falkirk, &c.) said, he rose to protest against the exclusion of Scotland from the benefits of the Bill. He heartily supported the measure; he thought it was required in Scotland as well as in England; and he hoped that in the Committee stage Scotland would be included within its purview.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he failed to understand why the further stages of the measure were to be postponed until after the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission. There was no doubt that the present Rule as to relief in the case of members of Friendly Societies did to a large extent deter people from joining such Societies. He maintained, therefore, that there was a pressing need for this legislation. In that view the President of the Local Government Board said he was in full agreement. The right hon. Gentleman agreed that the Boards of Guardians should have a discretionary power with regard to those applications of relief. The right hon. Gentleman further said that it was the general practice of the Boards of Guardians to act contrary to the opinion of the Local Government Board expressed in their Circular Letter; and that it would be well to bring the general practice into harmony with the law. If that were so, why should they wait for the Report of the Royal Commission? There was no necessity for delay in coming to a determination in such a matter. All the Bill would do would be to leave the matter in the discretion of the Guardians. It did not say that they should not take certain matters into consideration, but that they should not be bound to do so. He did not desire to prejudge any question it might be desirable to postpone until the Royal Commission had reported. Still, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would not stand in the way, so that it might be said that, practically speaking, the measure was unopposed.

Mr. CAINE (Bradford, E.) said, he was surprised at the position taken up by the President of the Local Government

Board with regard to the Bill. The reasons he had given for that position were illogical and absurd. Speaking as a member of the Lambeth Board of Guardians, and knowing something of the work of the Clapham and Wandsworth Board, he could tell the right hon. Gentleman that both Boards felt strongly with regard to the Bill. They were very much interested in any proposal to rescind the Circular to which attention had been drawn—a Circular which, on the evidence of the right hon. Gentleman himself, was taken no notice of by Boards of Guardians. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider his position, and would not ask the House to wait until the Report of the Royal Commission had been issued, especially as the subject was hardly germane to that under discussion by the Commission at the present time. Not a single word had been said against the principle of the Bill, even by the right hon. Gentleman himself. There was a universal concurrence of opinion on both sides of the House in favour of this reform, and he trusted that the Committee stage of the Bill might be taken at the earliest possible date.

MR. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) said, he hoped the suggestion of the last speaker would be carried out, and that there would be no delay in passing the Bill into law. The country owed a debt of gratitude to the Friendly Societies. The number of people in receipt of poor relief in the country had enormously decreased of late years, and he had no hesitation in saying that the greatest factor in that decrease had been the action of the Friendly Societies. It was hard that those who had brought about that state of things should not have some such benefit as the Bill proposed to give them. But he had risen more for the purpose of suggesting that the consideration of this Bill would form an occasion when something should be done towards fulfilling the object that most of them had in view with regard to old age pensions. He agreed that that subject was not altogether connected with the Bill, but he thought the House might engraft on the measure a provision which should enable any person who had made a certain provision for old age to receive a certain amount of outdoor relief. There was nothing the labouring classes, especially in the agricultural districts, dreaded more than the ultimate necessity of having to enter the workhouse when past work. If they felt they would be likely to secure the advantages which would be afforded them under the Bill, it would operate as an inducement to them to obtain old age pensions, and if they did that it would greatly relieve the rates of the country. Seeing that the Bill had been received with approval by both sides of the House, and by the representative of the Local Government Board, he trusted that the Bill would pass, and that the promoters would assent to the suggestion he made.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, that the line the President of the Local Government Board took up would leave them with the Circular of the Local Government Board in existence, the same being ignored by Boards of Guardians, and the House of Commons reading this Bill a second time, thereby approving the conduct of the Guardians in ignoring the Circular. The right hon. Gentleman, if he wished to wait for the Report of the Commission before going into Committee on the Bill, should at least withdraw the Circular. It seemed to him (Mr. Heneage) that the best course to pursue would be to pass the Bill through all its stages as rapidly as possible, to show the Guardians that even if the Circular was not withdrawn it was at least practically superseded by the law. The limitation of the duration of the Act would be a question for Committee.

MR. WARNER (Somerset, N.) said, he wished to add his protest against any delay in carrying the Bill, and to remind the House that there was a measure brought in last Session which would have become law had it not been for waiting until a Report was presented. The Bill would not affect the whole of the Report of the Commission. It would, no doubt, to a certain extent overlap it; but if they laid down a principle that they were never to pass a Bill overlapping a subject which was being inquired into by a Commission or a Committee there would be an end to all legislation.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he begged to express the heartiest concurrence with all the principles of the Bill save one—namely, that it did not extend to Ireland. He trusted that those in charge of the measure would agree to extend it to Ireland.

MR. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, there was nothing in the point raised by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The Royal Commission would be glad to have this point, or any other point, determined for them by the House. If the House this afternoon came to a decision to read the Bill a second time—as he hoped it would—the Royal Commission would have a clear lead, and would be relieved from any doubt or difficulty they might entertain in preparing their Report on that point.

MR. J. LEIGH (Stockport) said, that a large portion of his constituents in Stockport were interested in Friendly Societies, than which he did not think there was any better or stronger agency for the encouragement of thrift, and for the general benefit of the town itself. He, therefore, hoped the President of the Local Government Board would afford them the luxury of passing this Bill into law.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said that, after the strong expression of opinion which had been given, he would undertake that if he found that the Royal Commission did not report within a short time before the end of the Session, then he would endeavour to give facilities for making progress with the Bill. But, inasmuch as the Commission was now considering its Report, and was investigating this very subject, he thought it only respectful to that body to wait a short time in order to see the Report issued.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) did not seem to see that the Royal Commission could not record any opinion on this point without either approving of the principle of this Bill or going beyond the scope of their Commission. They might affirm that the present state of the law as to outdoor relief discouraged persons from entering Friendly Societies, and therefore was a hindrance to the creation of old age pensions. In that case they would be endorsing the principle of this Bill. If they did not think this particular law was such a discouragement or hindrance, what occasion would they have to allude to it at all, seeing that it dealt with sick pay and not pensions?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside) said, that the Government distinctly sympathised with the object of the Bill, and hoped that it would become law during the present Session. Hon. Members said that there was no necessity to wait for the Report of the Royal Commission; but whenever any step was proposed to be taken affecting labour it was said, "Wait for the Report of the Labour Commission." In the present instance the President of the Local Government Board made a very reasonable proposition. He proposed that they should wait for the Report, but that if it did not seem likely that it would be presented in time for legislation steps would be taken to assure the progress of the Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Webster) would admit that that was a reasonable proposition.

SIR R. WEBSTER: I do not.

MR. MUNDELLA said, he supposed the hon. and learned Member did not desire more than that the Bill should go through this Session.

SIR R. WEBSTER said that, as the House was unanimously in favour of the Bill, he failed to see the necessity of waiting for a lead from the Commission.

MR. MUNDELLA said, that at any rate the Bill would now be read a second time, and between now and the next stage the Government would be able to communicate with the Royal Commission and consider the position.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) said, that he was quite pleased at the unanimous support the Bill had received. While agreeing with the principles of the Bill he regretted that they had not been carried a little further. He did not wish to hamper the measure, but he would point out that there were other cases where the Guardians should have a discretionary power given them to make outdoor relief; such, for example, as that of an old soldier whose pension was insufficient to keep him in food and lodging, and who was therefore compelled to seek refuge in the workhouse. If money had been earned by the poor by thrift or good service it should not be a bar to their receiving assistance. At any rate, the Guardians should have a discretionary power in the matter.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

## RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—(No. 21.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CODDINGTON (Blackburn) said, he regretted that the exigencies of the ballot should have placed this important Bill in his hands. The measure had already received the approval of the House on many occasions by very large majorities. In 1890 the Second Reading was carried by a majority of 152, in 1891 it was agreed to without a Division, in 1892 it was carried by a majority of 110, and last year by a majority of 153. The Bill had the support of nearly all the Assessment Committees in England; of, he believed, the representatives of all the Trade Unions; of the textile manufacturers; of the engineering trades; and, in fact, of everybody who was interested in the various trades of the country. The system of rating buildings, boilers, and mill-gearing still prevailed in Lancashire, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, in the Leicester and Nottingham districts, and in many other districts. It was also considered a matter of public policy in the City of London that machinery should not be rated, while in the neighbouring borough of West Ham even a movable crane was rated, although the engine which drew the crane was not. While this system of rating only buildings and mill-gearing and engines existed in a large part of England, still there was a percentage of towns where the new system prevailed, and, unfortunately, that percentage was increasing. This very year the town of Wolverhampton had altered its system of rating, and the Assessment Committee had decided, against the wishes of all the owners of works, and against the Chamber of Commerce of that town, to rate machinery. In one instance in Wolverhampton the alteration in the assessment on works where 900 men, women, and children were employed had been increased from 10s. 3d. per head to 21s. 6d. Anyone connected with trade must know that such an increase in the assessment must almost kill that trade in that town. He felt, therefore, that, if the Assessment Committee could not see their way to make some change, they would do very great injury to the town. In Scotland no such rating existed, and, as a consequence, certain industries had already begun to migrate from England to that country. A very important deputation had waited upon the Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler), when he was President of the Local Government Board, in relation to this subject. The right hon. Gentleman had made a very able speech on that occasion. He had said in the course of his remarks—

> "Now, I understand the position of the case to be this: that up to the decision which was given in the Chard case, and in the Tyne Boiler case . . . there was no difference of opinion prevailing among the Assessment Committees throughout the Kingdom. It was not a question as to whether this property should be exempt or not; in no case was it taxed and made liable to rates. . . . Then I understood the next step was that by, no doubt, an accurate interpretation of the law—it would not become me to imply anything to the contrary—no doubt by an accurate interpretation of the law the Judges decided that a class of property which had never been rated was to be rated for the future, and so far from your asking—at least, so far from that class of property now asking—Parliament to exempt it from rates, it rather asks that the law which was generally understood to be the law should continue to be the law; or—there is another side to it—or that if Parliament in its wisdom should see fit that a property never hitherto rated is to be made subject to rates, that shall be done by Parliament, and not by the Judges. Well, gentlemen, I need hardly say that whatever view I may take of this question of rating, in that view I most cordially concur; it is the business of Parliament to impose taxes upon the Queen's subjects, and through their Representatives alone ought any class of the community to be subjected to any taxation whatever. Therefore, I think we see pretty clearly what the state of things now is. Then I understand from a gentleman who spoke to me on behalf of the Unions that at present only a small number of Unions have adopted this new view of the law. Therefore, the state of things is this—that we have chaos throughout the whole of the Assessment Committees of this Kingdom. The law is said to be, and is, one way; the practice is the other; and neither those who are claiming in favour of exemption, nor those who entertain a contrary opinion, know what will be done in any specific Union; and it is a matter of contest in each Union, now tending to increase year by year, as to whether property of a certain description or not is to be subject to rates or not."

That was their position. They contended that the law should be made distinct. If machinery was to be rated, let it be done by Act of Parliament and not by the decision of Judges alone. He believed that many Members from agricultural districts were opposed to this Bill. He would like to point out to them that it was an absolute advantage that there should be as many large works in a town as possible, not only for the employment of the population, but also to relieve the rates. Take the case of Oldham. In Oldham, in proportion to its population, there were more large works than in any other town, he believed, in the United Kingdom. There were large machine works, large engineering works, and an enormous number of textile mills, and the consequence was that the rates of the town were lower almost than any other town in England. Last year the rates of Oldham, including the poor, the school, and the borough rates, were only 3s. 7d. in the £1, and this year they were only 4s. 1d. in the £1. He did not know another manufacturing town in so happy a position, and he admitted the fact that these mills and works were rated on the principle which they advocated, and contributed an enormous sum of money to the rates of the town, without incurring a similar expense to the town itself. Agricultural Members instead of opposing ought to support the Bill. Many industries in this country might be removed from the crowded towns, where rents were dear, to the country districts. If small industries were so removed they would contribute to the rates of the districts without taking from them money needed for the local burdens. If machinery, however, were placed within the powers of Assessment Committees such a change as that could not be expected to take place, and if Assessment Committees throughout the country were to be governed by the principle adopted in some parts of England—for instance, in Wolverhampton — almost the whole of the textile and engineering trades would leave the country. He feared whatever he might say would not alter the views of some hon. Members on this question; but he could assure them that if he thought the Bill would injure any portion of the community, if he did not believe it would be of great advantage to the country, he should not be moving the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Coddington.*)

Sir A. HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.) said, he most heartily supported the Second Reading. In our large towns every class of ratepayers was benefited by the extension of machinery. To workmen employment was thus afforded; shopkeepers benefited by the custom of the workmen. Benefit was also derived by the employers themselves, and the same might be said of all other classes. He maintained that any policy which tended to discourage the extension of machinery was for all classes mischievous in its effects.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) said, hon. Members could not expect to exempt one man from the payment of rates without making someone else pay them. One class of people could not be relieved without at the same time putting the burden on the shoulders of others. If this Bill were passed the House would save a single manufacturer in one town alone, Wolverhampton, no less than £500 a year. A Bill seeking to make such extraordinary changes in the incidence of taxation was, he should have thought, of sufficient importance to be either taken up or strongly opposed by the Government, instead of being allowed to pass through as a private Members' Bill, without either support or opposition. These assessments on machinery, his hon. Friend had said, were levied under Judge-made law. If so, why not appeal against them? But the Law of Rating had existed time out of mind. It had never been repealed, and the House of Lords had declared what the law was on the subject. Those decisions of the Judges were on the principle of the old Act, 42 Eliz., and it was by no means newly-made law. The fact that some of our Rating Authorities evaded the law, forgot it, or did not know how to apply it, was no reason for supposing this was recent law. It was nothing of the kind. He would point out, however, that all Rating Authorities had not neglected their duty in this respect. Birmingham had long ago settled this question in a way which satisfied everyone. The application of the law was no doubt very difficult: it was not easy to decide what was the value of a hereditament. Only a very rough estimate could be made. But the difficulty had been solved at Birmingham and also at West Ham, where all machinery was rated. His hon. Friend's argument was that if the law of rating were carried out machinery and capital would be driven away, and the departing machinists and capitalists would carry everything and everybody else in their train. Such a misfortune had not happened in the towns where the law was carried out, and their industries were still going on. In every agricultural district where machinery was relieved from rating the rich capitalist would be relieved of a burden which the law placed upon him at the expense of the farmers and labourers. This was a rich man's proposal brought forward by the machinists of the country and their friends, who wanted to relieve themselves of a legal burden. Hon. Members on the opposite side did not deny that land was greatly over-taxed in proportion to personalty. Land was very heavily rated, and the farmer in the country was much more hardly treated than the capitalist in the town, who only paid upon house property. When the Government was engaged in placing heavier burdens of taxation on land, the moment was not opportune to come forward with a scheme for the exemption of machinery in towns from taxation under the ordinary law of the land.

Mr. WHITELEY (Stockport) said, the great principle embodied in the Bill, and for which its supporters contended, was that it was distinctly wrong that machinery should be taxed in the way advocated. It was wrong in principle, and in practice harmful and injurious alike to the owners of machinery, the industrial community, and the country at large. He was surprised at the argument of his hon. Friend, though continually heard indeed in that House—the cry of "Land, land," nothing but "land." The Government had to levy taxation on the country, and large sums were required for naval defence. Those sums were levied alike on realty and personalty. What would they think if the owners of machinery and other personal property were to get up in that House and say, "We will not support your proposals, because we think it is advisable that taxes should be levied all round alike"? No injury whatever would be done by the passing of this Bill. It would not touch the landed estates of the country. No greater misfortune or injury could be inflicted on any community than to prosecute a policy which would have the ultimate effect of hampering our large manufacturing industries and dislocating the business of the country by this interference with the machinery in our mills. Such a policy was simply "killing the goose that laid the golden eggs." As had been pointed out by the Secretary for India, the Manchester trade was gradually transferring itself to another part of the world; and the same thing was seen in other directions. The effects were seen in the great machine shops of the country, particularly in Lancashire, where, to a large extent, they were working one-fourth time. All our machinery was going abroad, and our policy should be to relieve the industries of the country as far as possible, which gave employment to our workpeople and relieved the rates throughout the country.

*Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS (Birmingham, S.) said, there ought to be some definition of the law and, at any rate, some uniformity of practice in rating. Different methods of rating prevailed throughout the Kingdom, and, therefore, a change in the law would be welcome. He opposed the Bill because, though its promoters desired to put the matter back into the position in which it stood before the decision in the celebrated Chard case, the Bill distinctly made a change which would act adversely in certain places in the Kingdom. In Birmingham the Assessing Authorities had, it was admitted, gone beyond the motive power and the shafting; and recent decisions had justified that course in rating machinery. Matters had been included which would be excluded if this Bill became law. The question was what had been the practical effect of that course upon the assessment? Those in charge of the assessment in Birmingham had informed him that if the Bill passed in its present shape the assessment would be reduced by £20,000 to £25,000 — which the promoters of the Bill themselves would not desire. That was, to say, whereas the authorities of Birmingham had assessed the motive power and shafting and something beyond at 50s. per nominal horse-power, that amount would have to be reduced by the value of the assessment beyond the shafting. That would make a difference in the annual rating of between £7,000 and £8,000, which was practically a 1d. rate to be levied on other classes of property. To whose shoulders would that burden be transferred? That raised the whole question. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had stated that the more machinery was used the greater number of persons would be employed; but he would make precisely the contrary assertion. Anyone acquainted with commerce and manufactures would know many instances where the introduction of machinery had driven numbers of workmen out of employment. This Bill would put the rating on the shoulders of the very people thrown out of employment. If the rating value of Birmingham were reduced £8,000 a year, who would have to pay it? Why, the workmen of Birmingham and no one else. It was proposed to place a burden now levied upon manufacturers in the shape of annual rent-charges on the shoulders of the working classes. The small houses in Birmingham constituted about 95 per cent. of the occupation holdings; and if the manufacturers were to be relieved at the expense of the householders, the owners of the houses in which the working classes lived would know how to take care of themselves. If it were contended, as a principle of political economy, that the sources of industry ought not to be taxed, why was it proposed by the Bill to allow the rating still to operate upon motive power and shafting? If there was anything in that argument about not taxing the sources of industry, he would go further and ask what right had they to tax the buildings used for production or the fixed plant employed? He objected to the Bill on another ground—of principle. He was strongly in favour of the taxation of personalty. The present Government had very rightly committed themselves in that direction to a large extent. One class of personalty ought not to be taxed while another went free, and this Bill was in the wrong direction, inasmuch as it was designed to avoid the rating of certain personalty. The sooner some Government undertook a general rating of personalty the better. The late Government took a considerable step in that direction by applying the Death Duty in relief of local taxation. This Bill as drawn went a long way towards denying a useful principle which had been admitted to some extent. He had put down an Amendment for Committee on a former occasion which would at any rate preserve the state of things now existing in Birmingham, and prevent any reduction of assessment by the operation of the Bill. But that was scarcely a satisfactory way out of the difficulty. He thought the House would do well to refer the Bill to a Select Committee in order to obtain evidence which would enable the House to arrive at a just and equitable decision in the matter. Evidence would be obtained from Birmingham and other places where the rating had gone beyond the shafting, showing precisely the principle there adopted. A Bill could then be formulated upon the subject which would be satisfactory to all who took an interest in this important question.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he was surprised at the attitude of the hon. Gentleman, since not only had the Bill been referred to a Select Committee, but that Committee had discussed very fully the whole Birmingham custom. If the new system of rating was carried into effect, the tendency would be to drive manufacturers from England to Scotland, where a different law prevailed. The effect of rating machinery would not be to substitute manual labour for machinery, but to drive our industries to other countries. No part of the country was more interested in the Bill than the agricultural districts. Their great grievance at present was that they could not get markets for their produce; and if they could establish little centres of industry in their midst, they would at once obtain these markets.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central) said, he proposed, on behalf of the Government, to take the course adopted in former years both by the Secretary for India and by Mr. Ritchie, and to leave this matter to the judgment of the House. But he had no hesitation in expressing his own opinion on the subject. Until a few years ago it was the almost universal practice of Assessment Committees throughout the country not to rate machinery. The matter was brought before the Judges, and they gave their decision. It would not be right to say they laid down any new law; on the contrary, they merely affirmed the old law, which had been to a large extent lost sight of. But, to all intents and purposes, it was new law as regarded the greater part of the country, and if it had been acted upon a great change would have taken place in the practice of the majority of the Assessment Committees.

The Assessment Committees had continued their former practice. In 1887 a Select Committee heard evidence on the question, and recommended that a comprehensive measure should be brought in dealing with the whole subject of rating, and that in the meantime Assessment Committees should continue to exempt machinery from rating. In other words, they recommended that these Committees should not conform to the law of the land. That was a very serious position. Either the practice ought to be brought into conformity with the law, or the law ought to be brought into conformity with the practice. He believed the wiser course would be to bring the law into conformity with the practice, seeing that 388 Assessment Committees carried out the practice, and only 10 or 12 conformed to the law. He would not advise that course if he thought the result would be to throw fresh burdens on land; but that would not be the case, because in the rural districts machinery was not now subject to rating. It was extremely important, in the interests of the rural districts, that every inducement should be given to manufacturers to establish factories there; and, on the whole, he thought that it would be wise for the House to re-affirm its decisions on this subject.

**SIR R. WEBSTER** (Isle of Wight) said, he hoped the Bill would be read a second time. It was, however, quite a mistake to suppose that Lord Esher had laid down any new law on this subject. The law was laid down in the same direction more than 50 years ago. The subject was, undoubtedly, a difficult one. On the one hand, no one would wish to rate sewing machines, which were chattels in the ordinary sense of the term, but it was ridiculous to attempt to exempt heavy machinery, which was not intended to be movable, but to pass from tenant to tenant. He recollected that some 20 years ago he was engaged in a case in which the Local Authorities at Newcastle sought to rate a steam hammer striking a blow of some 300 or 400 tons, which was part of the machinery at Sir W. Armstrong's works, and that the rate was resisted on the ground that it was not affixed to the freehold, it being bedded on a mass of metal weighing 400 or 500 tons which had been laid upon the earth. It was absurd to describe such a machine as movable, and in his opinion it ought to be rated. Then there was the case of the great sheerlegs, some 120 feet in height, that were used in the shipbuilding yards, which were in no sense affixed to the freehold, but which were never intended to be removed from their position in the shipbuilding yard, but were intended to pass from tenant to tenant. Surely such machinery as that ought not to be exempted from rating on the ground that it was movable. He thought that the measure should be referred to a competent Committee, which should be empowered to lay down some definition which should clearly show what machinery should and what should not be liable to be rated. If all machinery were to be exempted from rating very much heavier burdens would be thrown upon houses and land than was the case at present. He did not care whether the Bill was referred to a Select or to a Grand Committee, as long as an adequate inquiry into the subject was had and a clear definition of rateable machinery was laid down.

MR. CODDINGTON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

**MR. S. EVANS** described the measure as being a manufacturers' Bill, which was brought in for the purpose of enabling them to avoid paying the fair contribution which they ought to make to the local rates. The Bill had been changed a little since last year, collieries, which were previously exempted, being now included; but it was idle for the promoters to say that if the Bill passed a greater burden would not be thrown upon the workmen. Machinery never had been rated, and the Courts had decided that no machinery was assessed. He protested against the Bill being described as a Bill for the rating of machinery; it was a Bill to exempt certain parts of premises which contained machinery, and unless the House were prepared to adopt that principle it ought not to read the measure a second time.

**SIR J. JOICEY** (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, that this Bill was intended to alter the law, and great injustice would be done to the district he represented if the Bill passed. He regretted the absence of his hon. Friends, whose constituencies were deeply interested in this measure. This was a question that ought to be dealt with not by a Private Bill, but by the Government. The question had been considered by a Select Committee, who had found that it bristled with difficulties. It would therefore be extremely unwise for the House to pass this measure that day. He himself represented a constituency consisting largely of working men. He believed the rateable value was about £270,000, and to give the House some idea of the population he might state that £77,000 of that value was made up of tenemented property. If this Bill passed, he was told on the best authority—the authority of men who had gone into the question very carefully—that it would increase the rates from 6d. to 11d. in the £1, and that increase would undoubtedly fall upon the working classes in the town. He maintained that if the Bill passed it would be the large Companies like the Northern Eastern Company and John Abbot and Company, and others in the town of Gateshead, that would get relief, but it would be at the expense of their workmen, and he failed to see how an industry could be seriously affected either for advantage or disadvantage by taking the rate off the manufactory and putting it upon the men who were working the manufactory. In Gateshead they had adopted the Public Libraries Act, the rate for it at present being 1d. in the £1. The whole of that rate was required to maintain the library there. One-third went to pay off the money borrowed to erect the library, one-third was expended on salaries, and one-third upon literature. If this Bill passed, it would take a very considerable sum from the library which was now available for that purpose, and the only way to meet the loss would be by increasing the rateable value of the workmen's houses, otherwise they would not be able to buy the necessary books for their library. The Mover of this Bill had stated that the working classes were practically unanimous in favour of the Bill. That was not the case in the Counties of Durham and Northumberland. There the working classes were averse to this Bill, and the united coal trade in the North of England had petitioned against it again and again. He thought it would be a great shame if Gateshead, which had observed the law with respect to rating, were punished because in other districts the law had been broken. Long before the Chard decision the system in his district had been the same as at present. Their assessors had understood the law, and had assessed property accordingly, and on the strength of their assessment they had raised £200,000 under the Public Loans Act, and they should not be punished now simply because other districts had not taken the right view of the law. Machinery itself was not rated, but its existence was taken into consideration in the valuation of the building. It would be most unjust if this Bill passed, because it would put places like Gateshead, Sunderland, and Jarrow in a very great difficulty. It was perfectly plain, from the clear definition of what the law was given by the late Attorney General, that this Bill proceeded to alter the law, and that the only cause for this proposal was difference in practice among the Assessing Authorities. They in the North of England had observed the law. It was in other districts that the law had not been observed. He had heard it stated that machinery on farms was not rated. Well, he held a great many farms on which there was machinery, and he knew that when these farms were let the machinery and the facilities created by the existence of the machinery were taken into consideration in the rating, and on that ground he held that agricultural machinery was rated. He hoped that before the House came to a Division Members would take into their serious consideration all that had passed in this Debate, and if they did so he felt sure that they would not readily interfere with the present arrangement.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) referred to the case of a small town with a circle of purely agricultural land round it. In that small town was a certain amount of machinery which was available for rating purposes; and if this Bill passed that portion of the rates would be lost, with the result that the rates in the agricultural area would be increased. He hoped that the fact that the Bill might put an additional burden on the agricultural interest would have some effect with hon. Gentlemen in coming to a decision on this Bill.

**Mr. MATHER** (Lancashire, S.E., Gorton) said, he hoped the House would allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading. He thought that after discussion in four different years and four large Divisions it would be highly desirable that the Bill should be sent to the Grand Committee on Trade, where the matter could be discussed in the light of day.

**Mr. EVERETT** (Suffolk, Woodbridge) submitted that this Bill did not stand in the same position as the Bills of previous years, for the House had now under discussion a Budget which would put realty and personalty on the same footing so far as it was possible to do so, and this Bill sought to exempt from rating a certain section of personal property. He, therefore, proposed to vote against it.

**Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS** (Birmingham, S.): If this Bill should be read a second time, Mr. Speaker, will it be competent to move that it be referred to a Committee?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: It is perfectly competent for any hon. Gentleman to make a Motion of that kind.

**Mr. AMBROSE** (Mayo, W.) said, no doubt, in point of law, machinery was assessable when affixed to a freehold; but the effect of decisions in the Courts had been to make machinery, such as looms standing by their own weight, liable to rating. This Bill would not prevent the rating of machinery belonging to the landlord of the premises or the owner of the freehold.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 211; Noes 120.—(Division List, No. 42.)

Bill read a second time.

**Mr. CODDINGTON**: I beg to move "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade."—(*Mr. Coddington.*)

**Mr. S. EVANS** (Glamorgan, Mid): Mr. Speaker, can the hon. Gentleman move that without notice?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Yes; it is competent to the hon. Member to move it.

**Mr. S. EVANS**: Then I object.

It being after half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

## SMALLER DWELLINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 71.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. Cross.*)

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) asked for an explanation of the measure.

**Mr. A. CROSS** said, the object of the Bill was to do away with a grievance largely felt among the smaller class of occupiers in Scotland. It was the practice in the month of February to settle the question of the occupancy of a house for one year from the following Whitsuntide. Many circumstances might arise which might make it undesirable that a small tenant should be saddled with a house for so long a period, and the object of the Bill was to amend the law in this respect. Reasonable conditions were introduced for the protection of all parties. The landlord was entitled under the Bill to obtain possession of his property in the event of the rent not being paid, and there was a clause providing that the rates should be compounded for. The operation of the Bill was limited to burghs, and to houses of under £15 a year in burghs. The Bill had been considered by working-class Societies and Trades Unions, and he believed that all the Scotch Members were in receipt of communications on the subject.

**Mr. W. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT** (Cheshire, Macclesfield): As this seems rather a complicated Bill, I must object to the Second Reading.

**Mr. A. CROSS**: I hope the hon. Member will allow the Bill to proceed.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY**: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman does not know that the Mover of the Bill is a Unionist.

**Mr. W. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT**: I object.

Second Reading deferred till Monday, 21st May.

## STEAM TRAWLERS (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 200.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

**Mr. CROMBIE** (Kincardineshire), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, it was a non-controversial measure and was backed by one Representative of each Party. It proposed that the master of a steam trawler must have a certificate of competency, which might be suspended if he broke the law.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Crombie.*)

An hon. MEMBER: What does the Board of Trade say?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): This Bill has been brought before the Board of Trade, and I have no reason to know that they object to it. I asked my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) whether any objection was to be taken to it, and he was not aware of any.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, that in the absence of the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) he must object to the Second Reading.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT, Morpeth): The Board of Trade does not object to the Second Reading of the Bill, but will make Amendments in Committee.

An hon. MEMBER: I object.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) expressed a hope that the objection would be withdrawn.

MR TOMLINSON (Preston) said, the Bill might injuriously affect English or Irish trawlers, and he must therefore object to it.

Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 30th May.

### POLICE (SLAUGHTER OF INJURED ANIMALS) BILL.—(No. 208.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) moved the Second Reading of this Bill, which he said would simply empower a police constable, where he found a horse seriously injured in the street, to obtain a veterinary certificate and to have the animal slaughtered on the spot.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Banbury*,)—put, and agreed to.

Bill committed for Monday, 21st May.

*Mr. Crombie*

### HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 207.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 171.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

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### PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Fifth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

### COMMONS REGULATION PROVISIONAL ORDER (LUTON) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. H. Gardner, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Board of Agriculture relating to the Regulation of certain Commons in the Borough of Luton, in the County of Bedford, ordered to be brought in by Mr. H. Gardner and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 223.]

### IMPORTATION OF PRISON-MADE GOODS BILL.

On Motion of Colonel Howard Vincent, Bill to prevent the Importation into Great Britain and Ireland of Goods manufactured or produced wholly or in part by Foreign Prison Labour, ordered to be brought in by Colonel Howard Vincent, the Marquess of Carmarthen, Mr. Keir-Hardie, Sir Frederick Seager Hunt, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Muntz, Mr. Havelock Wilson, Major Rasch, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Boulnois, Mr. Conybeare, and Mr. Field.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 224.]

### FOREIGN AND COLONIAL MEAT (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Field, Bill for the marking of frozen Foreign and Colonial Meat in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Field, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Horace Plunkett, and Mr. M'Gilligan.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 225.]

### CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894–5 (ADDITIONAL ESTIMATE) (TRALEE AND DINGLE LIGHT RAILWAY).

Copy presented,—of Estimate of the Amount required in the year ending 31st March 1895 as a Grant in Aid of Expenses caused by an accident on the Tralee and Dingle Light Railway, Class I. Vote 16 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Thursday, 10th May 1894.*

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## WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL. [H.L.]

### BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

*LORD **DENMAN** introduced the Women's Suffrage Bill (1894): He said, it ought to have been passed much earlier, but the promoters had been endeavouring to find out who opposed it.

Bill for extending the right of voting at Parliamentary, Municipal, and County Council elections in the United Kingdom to duly qualified women—Was presented by the Lord Denman; read $1^{a}$; and to be printed. (No. 61.)

## TROUT FISHING (SCOTLAND) BILL. [H.L.]

### SECOND READING.

LORD **LAMINGTON** said, this Bill had only been circulated that day, and as he understood further time was desired on the part of the Government for the consideration of the Bill, he begged to postpone it until the 28th instant.

Second Reading put off to Monday, the 28th instant.

## PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.—(No. 46.)

Read $2^{a}$ (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday, the 28th instant.

## SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROCEDURE) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 26.)

Read $3^{a}$ (according to Order); Amendments made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

## LIMITATION OF ACTIONS BILL [H.L.] (No. 39.)

Order of the day for the Third Reading, read, and discharged.

## INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 28.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read $3^{a}$ on Monday, the 28th instant.

## TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 2) BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Croydon Corporation Tramways, Croydon Tramways (Extensions), and South Staffordshire Tramways—Was presented by the Lord Playfair; read $1^{a}$; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 59.)

## CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

Commons Message considered (according to Order): Moved, that this House do concur in the Resolution communicated by the Commons, viz., "That all Bills of the present Session to confirm Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the 'Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888,' containing the classification of merchandise traffic and the schedule of maximum rates, tolls, and charges applicable thereto, be referred to a Joint Committee of Lords and Commons" (*The Lord Playfair*); agreed to; and a Message sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

## COUNTY SECRETARIES SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to enable Grand Juries in Ireland to grant superannuation allowances to county secretaries—Was presented by the Lord Castletown; read $1^{a}$; and to be printed. (No. 60.)

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read $1^{a}$, and to be printed. (No. 62.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday, the 28th instant, a quarter past Four o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday, 10th May 1894.*

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## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

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## CAMBRIDGE CORPORATION BILL.

*(By Order).*

### THIRD READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE].

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th May], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

SIR J. MOWBRAY (Oxford University) said, that he wished to read to the House a letter which he had received from Mr. Oman, Fellow of All Souls College, and Proctor of the University of Oxford, with reference to a statement made by the hon. and learned Member for the Maldon Division in the course of Tuesday's Debate. Mr. Oman forwarded a report of the speech of the hon. Member in which he related to the House an incident which he said had occurred while he was at Oxford. It was the case of a young lady who, on leaving the Union with her cousin and two other undergraduates, was arrested by the Proctor's bulldogs and taken to the prison. On this part of the hon. and learned Member's speech Mr. Oman wrote—

> "No such case ever occurred in Oxford. It is well known that no arrest of the kind has ever been made—no single mistake of this description is on record for 30 years. Mr. Dodd ought to be made to substantiate his statement by giving names and dates. No women are locked up under the Clarendon building except known prostitutes who have been previously cautioned by the Proctor. The extent of Mr. Dodd's memory of Oxford may be judged by the fact that he speaks of the Proctors walking, as if several were accustomed to parade at once. He also speaks of the 'bulldogs' as seizing and imprisoning a girl on their own responsibility—a manifest impossibility. We have constables here still serving who were acting all through Mr. Dodd's time. I have questioned them as to any event having occurred which could possibly have been twisted into the shape of Mr. Dodd's tale, and there is no trace of any such thing having occurred. We have a complete record of all women ever arrested and brought to the cells.
>
> "C. W. C. OMAN."

The hon. and learned Gentleman's statement was very definite and explicit, and presumably it rested on some facts. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he could reconcile his statement with the letter he had just read.

*MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, that he was very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for the considerate way in which he had given him notice of the letter just read. He was glad that the Proctor should have written that letter, because it showed that the University authorities felt that, if such a mistake could occur, the present system was doomed. The facts were exactly as he had stated them to the House. He knew the people well. As to his knowledge of Oxford, he was born six miles out of the city; until a few years ago his father had a house at Oxford: and he himself had always spent a great deal of time there. He had in confidence given the name of the lady concerned to the right hon. Member for Oxford University; the right hon. Gentleman was a man of honour, and the right hon. Gentleman's comment was, "Oh, my gracious!" [*Laughter.*] That was as strong an expression as could be expected from the Member for the University of Oxford. But he did not say these things for the sake of raising a laugh. Ever since he had known the story which he had related to the House he had been determined to denounce this system. Of course, it was not to be supposed that such a case would be entered on the books; official blunders are not always found recorded in official books; but the gaoler and his wife were still living—they would know the facts. If he said more, he should betray the name of the lady. He would only add that, though her parents lived at that time in Oxford, after this experience she would never go near the house, if she could help it. At the time she, like the good, honest girl she was, wished her father to make the Proctors and "bulldogs" apologise in open Court; but her father, being connected with the University, did not care for the publicity, and was satisfied with the letters of apology, which were still locked up in his desk. He should be going to Oxford soon, and he should call on Mr. Oman, whose name he knew well. Mr. Oman would see that he had been unwise to dispute his statement. It was perfectly plain that even the Proctors would not like the present system to continue if this story were true; and it was true. Therefore, he asked the House to say that the system should be stopped.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 145; Noes 112.—(Division List, No. 43.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

## SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) LAW, &c.

SIR J. MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Stanley Leighton; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Wootton Isaacson, as one of the fifteen Members added in respect of the Church Patronage Bill.

Report to lie upon the Table.

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill, without Amendment.

Trustee Act (1893) Amendment Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Supreme Court of Judicature Acts." [Supreme Court of Judicature (Procedure) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the law relating to the limitation of actions." [Limitation of Actions Bill [Lords].

## *QUESTIONS.*

### LIVERPOOL CITY BOUNDARIES.

**MR. SNAPE** (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the event of the extension of the Liverpool city boundaries being sanctioned, the number of representatives in the City Council will be enlarged, having regard to area and population, on a proportionate scale to the numerical increase of representatives given to Manchester when the boundaries of that city were extended?

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): The question as to the representation of wards in the case referred to is receiving consideration, and the Corporation of Liverpool will be informed as soon as a decision has been arrived at.

### PROMOTION IN THE PRISON SERVICE.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD** (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if promotion from Deputy Governor to Governor in Her Majesty's Prison Service deprives officers in receipt of Army non-effective pay of the protection afforded by Section 10 of the Superannuation Act of 1887; and whether Colonel Partridge, the present Governor of Parkhurst Convict Prison, was, on promotion from Deputy Governor to Governor, deprived of 10 per cent. of his Civil salary, and five years of his service towards a Civil pension, on account of his having retired with a gratuity from the Army, notwithstanding that he was apparently protected by Section 10 of the Superannuation Act of 1887?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): An officer is free to accept or to refuse promotion to the office of Governor of a Prison, but his acceptance is conditional on his foregoing one of the rights secured by the section quoted—namely, exemption from any abatement from Civil salary, when received together with military pay or pension. Colonel Partridge, by accepting the office of Governor of Parkhurst Prison, accordingly became liable to an abatement of 10 per cent. on his increased Civil emoluments. He has not been deprived of any years of his service towards Civil pension on account of his having retired with a gratuity from the Army.

### EMPLOYMENT FOR SOLDIERS' WIVES.

**MR. KEARLEY** (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Clothing Department, Pimlico, acting through a body called the Devonport Shirt Association (consisting of officers' wives and daughters, and presided over by the garrison chaplain), employs soldiers' wives and widows in making ordinary service shirts at sweating rates of pay; whether he is aware that these shirts are cut out at headquarters, and sent down in bales to Devonport and other naval and military towns for distribution by this and similar Associations among the garrison women, and that the following conditions are imposed upon the workers: that the price allowed for making—namely, 7¾d. per shirt, is only to be paid for shirts that are well made, and, if any fault should be found with the work, the maker of the shirt is to take it home for alteration; that bad workers will be struck off the list if they take no pains to improve; that should any shirt after passing the local committee be rejected at Pimlico, a fine of 3d. is deducted for every shirt so condemned; and that the names of defaulters in this respect will be posted at the barracks; whether he is aware that out of the sum of 7¾d. the women have to find their own needles and cotton, and in the event of not possessing a sewing machine, have to incur a further expense of 1½d. per garment for machining, and that it takes a good needlewoman not less than eight hours to make a single garment; whether he is aware that there are as many as 300 women in the three towns alone employed in this work, and will he state the total employment throughout the country; and whether, in view of the undertaking given by the Government last year that the terms of Government employment should be beyond reproach, he will cause investigation to be made into this matter with a view to its rectification?

**THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE** (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: In order to benefit the wives of soldiers, and for the education of the younger members of their families, the practical needlework Associations of ladies under the direct control of the General Officers commanding have been formed in several districts. To these Associations the Army Clothing Department, considerably to its own inconvenience, issues cut-out materials for shirts, and pays for making them up at rates stated to be 42 per cent. above ordinary trade prices. The Clothing Department cannot go behind the Associations through which it gives employment to the women, beyond laying down strict rules fixing the smallest payment which may be made to the workers. The women have to provide themselves with needles and thread; but there is no prohibition of handsewing. It is estimated that the average time required to make a shirt is two-and-a-half hours with a machine, or five hours without. Bad work is necessarily rejected. It is not known how many women are employed under each Association, but it is supposed that about 3,000 women in all benefit by the arrangement. I may add that the system was adopted and is carried on solely from charitable motives, and that the Clothing Department would prefer to have the shirts made by ordinary contract. The demand for this employment of soldiers' wives much exceeds the supply which can be furnished.

## UGANDA.

**MR. J. W. LOWTHER** (Cumberland, Penrith): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have approved or ratified the Agreement made between King Mwanga of Uganda and the late Sir G. Portal on the 29th of May, 1893, and whether such approval or ratification has been notified to King Mwanga; and whether the final decision of Her Majesty's Government to declare a Protectorate of Uganda has been conveyed to Uganda and notified to King Mwanga, in accordance with Clause 16 of the Agreement of the 29th of May, 1893?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Agreement has not yet been formally approved or ratified. The decision of the Government in regard to Uganda will be duly notified to Mwanga, but it has not yet been despatched; the last caravan had already started before the announcement of the Protectorate was made.

**SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT** (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Is it a fact that Belgian forces, sent by the Congo Free State, are now in occupation of Lado, on the Nile?

**SIR E. GREY**: I have no definite information on that subject.

## THE BRITISH EAST AFRICA COMPANY.

**MR. J. W. LOWTHER**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have come to any decision upon the proposals submitted to them on the 23rd of June, 1893, by the Imperial British East Africa Company; whether any reply, beyond a merely formal acknowledgment, has been sent to the Company in answer to their letter of that date; and whether the decision, if any, at which Her Majesty's Government have arrived in this matter can now be communicated to the House?

**SIR E. GREY**: The decision upon this proposal had to be deferred till the policy with reference to Uganda had been determined; and, in the meanwhile, nothing more than a formal acknowledgment could be given. The point was, however, one of the first to come under consideration as soon as the Protectorate over Uganda had been announced, but the Company have just withdrawn their offer, and I cannot at present make any statement respecting their position.

### SLAVERY IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE** (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the economy that would be effected in connection with the duties thrown upon Her Majesty's ships in the event of the abolition of the Slave Trade, and in view of the recent Report from the Administrator of the Imperial British East Africa Company that a considerable Slave Trade is now being carried on in the district between Uganda and the coast, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to abolish the legal status of slavery in British East African Protectorates, including the Islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, which now afford a market for slaves brought from the interior of Africa; whether many slaves working on these islands were British protected people before they were kidnapped in Nyassaland; and what steps the British officials are taking to secure the freedom of these and all other slaves whom the Government have admitted are now illegally held in bondage?

**Sir E. GREY**: A Report which has been sent to the East Africa Company by its agent at Machakos speaks of capture of Marai women and children by the natives in that neighbourhood, but no evidence is given of any attempt to export them to Zanzibar and Pemba, where slave-markets no longer exist. My hon. Friend is already aware that Zanzibar is not a British Possession, but is a British Protectorate in which Mahommedan law prevails, and that the abolition of the legal status of slavery therefore involves serious political considerations. I can add nothing to previous answers as to this point and as to the measures now in force which it is considered will lead to the discontinuance of the institution of slavery. If any slave was proved to have been kidnapped either in Nyassaland or in any other part of the interior of Africa or to be illegally held in bondage it would be the duty of the British officials to interfere on his behalf.

### PEMBA CLOVE PLANTATIONS.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what has been the amount of revenue derived from the clove plantations in Pemba and Zanzibar; what has been the area under cultivation; and what has been the weight of cloves produced during the years 1892 and 1893 respectively?

**Sir E. GREY**: Returns as to the Revenue for 1892 and as to the production for that year were given in the Report contained in Africa No. 4 of 1893. The Revenue is there given as 450,237 rupees. The Returns for 1893 are not yet complete, but will be laid in due course. I cannot give the area under cultivation, but information of much interest and detail on the subject of the clove cultivation was given in a Report drawn up by Mr. Fitzgerald, which is to be found in the Commercial Report of 1892, No. 266, Miscellaneous Series.

### THE CASE OF MR. E. O'KELLY.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and if so what, steps have been taken in the case of Mr. E. O'Kelly, of Baltinglass, County Wicklow?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND** (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I must ask the hon. Gentleman to defer this question until after the recess. I shall take an opportunity of personally conferring with the Lord Chancellor on the matter in a day or two.

**Mr. MACARTNEY** (Antrim, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman if he was aware that in this case the transfer of the licence had not been confirmed at Quarter Sessions?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I must ask the hon. Member to postpone that question.

### TRALEE UNION FINANCES.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what the financial condition of the Tralee Union was when the Vice Guardians took charge of it, and in what condition they left it; also, the date of their appointment, and the date upon which their term of office expired; and whether, at the last meeting of the Board of Guardians, the manager of the National Bank reported that the account had again been overdrawn,and requested payment of interest on overdrafts amounting to £446 ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : When the Vice Guardians were appointed in this Union the liabilities of the Union amounted to about £4,800. The clerk of the Union informs the Local Government Board that on the 25th of March last, when the Vice Guardians' term of office expired, the liabilities of the Union were about £2,000, to meet which there was a balance in treasurer's hands of £1,166. There were also poor rates outstanding and collectible to the amount of £357, and about £1,000 worth of seed rate which the Vice Guardians had advanced out of the poor rates to pay off the seed loan to the Commissioners of Public Works. It is not, however, possible to state how much of this latter sum can be recovered by the Guardians so as to refund the poor rates. The Vice Guardians struck a new rate before ceasing to hold office. The Vice Guardians were appointed on the 23rd of June, 1892, and their statutory term of office expired at the general election of Guardians in March last. At the meeting of the Guardians on 2nd instant the treasurer called their attention to the fact that their account with the bank was overdrawn to the extent of £402, and that a sum of £466 was due for interest on overdrafts. The overdraft by the Guardians appears to have been caused by their making large payments to contractors and others immediately after they came into office, and the collectors did not lodge sufficient rates to maintain a credit balance at the bank. The Guardians have now called on these officers to press forward their collections, so as to discharge the debt to the treasurer and maintain a balance in favour of the Guardians in his hands.

Sir T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.) asked if, in addition to an overdraft of £1,000, there was not a sum of £260 for interest left unpaid ?

Mr. J. MORLEY said he could not say as to that.

### DENUNCIATION IN IRELAND.

Mr. DANE (Fermanagh, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the decrease in the number of cases of denunciation in Ireland to which he has referred is a decrease in the number of such cases which have actually occurred, or is a decrease in the number of such cases reported to him by the Constabulary ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : The Reports which have been made to me by the Divisional Commissioners show that there has been a decline in the number of these cases of denunciation generally. These Reports were based on information in possession of the police as to the cases which actually occurred.

### IRISH NATIONAL FORESTERS AT CLEATOR MOOR.

Mr. AINSWORTH (Cumberland, Egremont) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the refusal of Mr. J. F. Kirkconnell, J.P. for Cumberland, to take a statutory declaration verifying alteration of Rules from the secretary of the "T. M. Healy" branch of the Irish National Foresters Benefit Society at Cleator Moor ; and if anything has been done to impress upon every Magistrate the necessity of his performing his duties ?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds.) (who replied) said : I am informed that the Lord Chancellor inquired of Mr. Kirkconnell as to the matter complained of, and received explanations from him which showed that the complaint was in substance well-founded ; but that there were circumstances of ill-health and irritation which might account for his having acted otherwise than he would ordinarily have done in the exercise of one of the duties undertaken by him when he accepted the office of a Justice of the Peace.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER asked if the occurrence referred to in the question did not take place nearly a year ago, and whether last December the Lord Chancellor did not accept Mr. Kirkconnell's explanation as satisfactory under all the circumstances ?

*Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he was informed that a correspondence did take place, with the result already indicated.

### PAROCHIAL REGISTRATION.

**MR. W. LONG** (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that in Liverpool and other large county boroughs the revision of the Register before one Barrister usually extends several days beyond the 22nd of September, the date mentioned in the Parochial Registration Acceleration Bill, and that notwithstanding the Registers are always completed for the municipal elections held on the 1st November, will he, under these circumstances, exclude county boroughs from the operation of the Bill, and thereby avoid the inconvenience and expense incident to the employment of an additional Revising Barrister?

**MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: The point referred to was brought under my notice, and I am considering whether it will be possible to introduce an Amendment in the Bill to meet it.

### LICENSING QUESTIONS AT STORNOWAY.

**SIR W. LAWSON** (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the local Magistrates for Stornoway have on four occasions refused drink licences for that town; and whether they have been four times overruled by the County Magistrates sitting at Dingwall; and, if so, whether anything can be done to meet the wishes of the Local Authorities at Stornoway?

***THE LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.) (who replied) said: The facts are as stated by the hon. Member. I understand that the proprietors of the three hotels to whom licences were refused appealed against the decision of the local Magistrates, and that their appeal was sustained by the Justices of Ross and Cromarty. The Court of Appeal at Dingwall is about nine or ten hours journey by sea and rail from the district which is affected by their decision.

### COMPOUND HOUSEHOLDERS.

**SIR H. JAMES** (Bury, Lancashire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the Government has any information as to the number of compound householder voters who have been disfranchised in consequence of the compounding landlord not being paid the rates compounded for?

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA** (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): There are no Returns as to the number of compound household voters who have been disfranchised in consequence of the compounding landlord not having paid the rates compounded for.

### SWAZILAND.

**MR. WEBSTER** (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is in a position to give the House any information as to the acute position of affairs reported from Capetown in regard to Swaziland; whether, after consultation with the Indunas of the nation, the Queen Regent of Swaziland has definitely refused to sign any document which would authorise the Transvaal Government occupying that country; and if the British Representative has declined to give the Queen Regent a letter authorising her to proceed to England to lay her case before Her Majesty, or the Government?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES** (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I do not think that, under the existing circumstances of the case, it would be expedient for me to make any statement on the subject.

### CASTS FROM THE ANTIQUE AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

**SIR A. BORTHWICK** (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will direct such experts as the Keeper of the Marbles at the British Museum, the President of the Hellenic Society, and others to visit the gallery where the casts from the antique are placed at South Kensington, and to report as to its suitability; and whether there was a better place for the display of the tapestries which have been hung in the hall allotted by Lord Spencer to Mr. Capland Perry for the Museum of Casts actually vacant in the new gallery behind the Imperial Institute?

**THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL** (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): I am unable to adopt the suggestion made by the hon. Baronet, whom I may perhaps refer to my answer of last Thursday to the hon. Member for Deptford. I do not think that the gallery referred to is a better place for the tapestries.

### TRINIDAD HARBOUR.

**Mr. PIERPOINT** (Warrington): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the late Sir John Coode communicated in writing, before the 6th of May, 1891, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, or to the Crown Agents for the Colonies, his opinion upon the various schemes for the improvement of the harbour accommodation of Trinidad; whether such communication was in the form of a letter or Report, and whether that is the Report referred to in the letter from the Colonial Office to Mr. Joseph Meston of the 30th of April, 1891; whether the Report published and dated 6th May, 1891, is the further Report mentioned in the letter from the Colonial Office to Mr. Samuel Bircham of the 20th of April, 1891; and whether he will produce the first Report or letter above referred to?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: As regards the first and second questions, the only official Report that we have in our possession is that dated May 6, 1891; and that is the further Report referred to in the third part of the hon. Member's question.

**Mr. PIERPOINT**: Can we see the Report of the 6th May, 1891?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: I do not know whether it was actually circulated, but it is in existence, and if the hon. Gentleman desires he can see it.

### WOOLWICH ORDNANCE FACTORIES.

**Mr. PIERPOINT**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he could state to the House what is the average number of skilled men employed at the Woolwich Ordnance Establishments on piece work and what on time work?

**Mr. WOODALL** (who replied) said: The average numbers of skilled men, excluding foremen, improvers, labourers, and lads employed in the Ordnance Factories, Woolwich, are about 2,950 on piece work and 1,830 on time work.

**Baron H. de WORMS** (Liverpool, East Toxteth): May I inquire whether the men on piece work have received any increase of pay?

**Mr. WOODALL**: No, Sir. There have been some modifications, but these have been in the direction of reductions.

### THE MATABELE WAR.

**Mr. MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if the war in South Africa may now be considered as over; and, if so, will he forthwith bring under the notice of the Government for honourable mention and such distinction as are generally conferred upon administrators who have, either in this country or in the colonies, carried wars to a successful issue?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: The war in Matabeleland may be considered as over; as regards the latter part of the question, I am not able to make any statement on the matter.

### IRISH TEACHERS' EXAMINATIONS.

**Mr. M'GILLIGAN** (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, as the instructions issued by the Commissioners of National Education to their Inspectors in reference to results examinations have an important bearing on these examinations, copies of the instructions are sent also to the teachers; and, if not, would he direct them to be so sent in the future?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that no special Code of Instructions is issued by them to the Inspectors in reference to the results' examinations. All necessary details relating to these examinations are personally discussed every year between the Commissioners and the Inspectors, and by this means uniformity is secured in the determination of the marks assigned by the Inspectors on the answering of the pupils.

### CUSTOMS' MESSENGERS.

**Mr. MACDONALD** (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Customs' messengers, when called upon for overtime after 4 p.m., were paid at the rate of 8d. an hour previous to the Treasury Minute of the 4th of March, 1891; whether £5 a year was given by this Minute for an additional hour of regular service from 4 to 5 p.m.; whether this £5 is withdrawn on promotion to the First Class, though previously members of this class were paid overtime when employed after 4 p.m.; and whether he would consider the case of these messengers?

The SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. Hibbert, Oldham): Customs' messengers, both before and since March, 1891, have been paid at the rate of 8d. per hour when required to attend beyond the number of hours constituting the official day. A personal allowance of £5 a year was sanctioned in February, 1891, to then existing First and Second Class Established Messengers in consideration of their giving seven hours instead of six daily. The Rule of the Civil Service is that such a personal allowance ceases at once on promotion, but subject to the condition that the messenger promoted carries with him his existing salary if above the minimum of the new class. It is impossible to reopen the question.

### AMALGAMATION OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF LONDON.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that copies of the evidence taken before the Royal Commission upon the Amalgamation of the City and County of London have been regularly forwarded to the London County Council, although no such copies have been sent to the Corporation of the City of London; and if he will be good enough to suggest to the Commissioners the propriety of directing that copies of the evidence already taken, as well as of that which will be hereafter received, shall be sent to the City Corporation at the same time as it is forwarded to the London County Council?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Any question as to the supply of copies of the evidence taken before the Royal Commission is clearly one for the Commissioners to determine. I have brought the suggestion of the hon. Member under their notice.

### BOYCOTTING IN COUNTIES MEATH AND LOUTH.

Mr. DANE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the persistent boycotting of certain tenants upon the estates of Lord Massereene and Fethard, in the Counties of Meath and Louth, through the medium of the Irish National Federation; whether this boycotting has been extended to the transit of their cattle and goods by the Steamship Companies at Drogheda; whether he is aware that the proceedings of the Irish National Federation have been published and advocated in the columns of successive numbers of *The Drogheda Independent* newspaper; whether the tenants are now, and have been for some time past, under police protection; and whether, having regard to the statement by the Government that there is now no boycotting in Ireland, the Irish Government will now inquire into the circumstances, and consider whether, under the existing law, these tenants can be relieved from boycotting and molestation; and, if not, whether steps will be taken to put in force the provisions of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act?

Mr. J. MORLEY: It is true that attempts have been made from time to time in the direction referred to in the question, but I am informed by the local Police Authorities that there is no foundation for the statement that the persons mentioned are subjected to persistent boycotting. The Drogheda Steampacket Company have always carried cattle and goods for the new tenants and are doing so still, and no complaint has been made to the police that they have not given every facility to the new tenants for the conveyance of themselves, their cattle, and their goods. These tenants naturally receive special attention from the police, but none of them are constantly protected. The information supplied to me shows that they can transact their business without molestation, and that the police are able to deal under the ordinary law with anything likely to arise.

### GERMAN PRISON-MADE GOODS.

Mr. DODD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state to what extent brushes made in German prisons are imported to and sold in this country, and whether articles made in the prisons of this country are to any, and what, extent exported to foreign countries, and whether they are marked as prison made; and, if he cannot give the figures of such imports, if he can cause inquiry to be made and then furnish to this House the result of such inquiry?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA, Sheffield, Brightside): I am unable to add anything to the answers which I gave to my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham on the 23rd of last month, and to the hon. Member for the Central Division of Sheffield on the 4th of the present month. The Board of Trade are still in communication with the Foreign Office on the subject. The German Ministries of Commerce and Industry and of the Interior have, I understand, decided to institute inquiries into the effects of prison labour on industry, and by my directions a letter has been addressed to the Foreign Office asking that any information which can be obtained in Germany with reference to such inquiries as may be instituted there shall at once be communicated to the Board of Trade. With reference to that part of the hon. Member's question which refers to the prisons of this country, there is nothing to prevent the export of brushes, mats, &c., made in the prisons of the United Kingdom; but I have no information at present as to whether this is done, and, if so, to what extent.

## LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE TULLAMORE UNION.

MR. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, as is reported in the local newspapers of the 23rd of February, the Local Government Board rejected a site for a labourer's cottage in Tullamore Union, chosen on a grazier's land, named M'Phelan, solely on the grounds that M'Phelan's farm was a grass farm, and that the supply of water was inconvenient, and the site at too great a distance from the road; under what section of any of the Labourers' Dwellings Acts do the Local Government Board hold that sites should not be chosen on grazing farms; with regard to the convenient water supply, what is the maximum distance allowed by the Local Government Board; with regard to the accommodation of a "public road," do they insist on a county road, or is any road open to the public sufficient; and did the landlord as

well as the tenant in the above case object?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board inform me that the application referred to was opposed at the inquiry by both landlord and tenant on the ground that the person for whom the cottage was intended was not an agricultural labourer; that there were already two cottages on the farm; that the farm was a grass farm, and additional labourers were not required there; and that an application for a cottage on this farm had been rejected at a previous inquiry. It does not appear that objection was raised as to the distance of the site from a water supply, or as to its not adjoining a public road. The Local Government Board do not consider that grazing farms are exempt from the provisions of the Labourers' Acts. The Board have not prescribed any distance as a maximum, nor do they insist upon the road being one under Grand Jury presentment. They consider that any road over which a public right of way exists is sufficient.

## LIVERPOOL CITY BOUNDARIES.

MR. W. LONG: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the fact that the Local Government Board have signified their approval of the extension of the boundary of the City of Liverpool in the scheme agreed between the City Council and the Local Board Authorities, including the municipal representation of the extended portions, he will put forward at once the Provisional Order for this purpose, without waiting for the consideration of the re-division of the wards within the present boundaries of the city; and whether he is aware that important sanitary works in the out districts are being kept in abeyance, awaiting the result of the application for the extension?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The questions which have been raised with regard to the Ward Divisions in the City of Liverpool must be considered in connection with the issue of a Provisional Order, and I am not prepared to make an Order with regard to the proposed extension until these questions have been determined.

## THE CORK STREET PREACHERS.

**MR. MAURICE HEALY** (Cork): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that Mr. George Williams, late clerk in the Paymaster General's Office, Dublin Castle, and at present employed by the Irish Church Missions to Roman Catholics as the leader of the Cork street preachers, is now, so far as can be judged, completely restored to health, and that he is only 44 years of age, the Government propose to call upon him to submit himself to medical examination, with a view to requiring him to re-enter the Public Service; and whether there is any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the Papers relating to Mr. Williams's superannuation?

**SIR J. T. HIBBERT** (who replied) said: The head of the Department in which Mr. George Williams served has satisfied himself that Mr. Williams is incapable of performing clerical duties, and I scarcely think there is reason for calling upon him to submit himself again for medical examination. I shall be happy to show my hon. Friend the Papers relating to Mr. Williams's superannuation.

## POSTAGE RATES FOR TRADE JOURNALS.

**MR. MAC NEILL** (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General why it is that weekly trade journals, although each copy may weigh a little under 14 ounces, can be posted for a halfpenny each anywhere within the limits of the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Channel Islands, and monthly trade journals must pay a halfpenny for every two ounces; and whether he will take some steps for the purpose of equalising the rates of postage of both weekly and monthly trade journals?

**THE POSTMASTER GENERAL** (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): Newspapers published at intervals of not more than seven days are entitled by Act of Parliament to transmission by post for a halfpenny each irrespective of weight, while monthly publications are liable to the same rate of postage as books or other printed matter. In the present condition of the Postal Revenue, I cannot see my way to recommend any extension of the existing newspaper privilege.

## SEALERS IN THE BEHRING SEA.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL** (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the instructions to the commanders of British and United States war vessels in Behring Sea, in reference to the warning and seizure of sealing vessels, are practically identical in terms; whether power is given to exclude sealing vessels from that portion of the North Pacific, or only to stop sealing; and whether he can present copies to the House?

**SIR E. GREY**: The instructions are practically identical so far as they can be in view of certain differences in the Acts passed respectively by the British and American Legislatures. No power is given to exclude sealing vessels, but only to seize vessels either sealing or bearing indications of having sealed contrary to the Regulation of the Behring Sea Award. There is no objection, so far as we are concerned, to publication, but we must consult the United States Government as to making public their instructions.

## SEALS IN RUSSIAN WATERS.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can present to the House a copy of the Treaty now negotiated between the United States and Russia for the protection of seals in Russian waters; and whether any negotiations for a similar treaty with the United Kingdom are in progress?

**SIR E. GREY**: We have not yet received the text of the Treaty referred to, which we are informed is similar to the Agreement now in force between the United Kingdom and Russia.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL**: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the second part of the question?

**SIR E. GREY**: No further communication has been received beyond the agreement of last year.

## OVERCROWDING PASSENGER STEAMERS.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, with regard to the steamship *Havel*, which arrived in the port of Southampton from New York this week with more than 50 passengers, whether.

in the case of this vessel, the Regulations were complied with as enacted, for instance, in Clauses 4, 14, 100, 101, and 103 of the Act 18 & 19 Vic., c. 119, which specify what space, accommodation, and so forth, are to be provided for passengers, and certified by the authorities of the port?

*MR. MUNDELLA: My attention had previously been directed to this vessel, which, however, only arrived at Southampton yesterday morning. The *Havel* was boarded off Calshot by one of the emigration officers acting under the instructions of the Board of Trade, and he reports this morning that the number of steerage passengers on the lower passenger deck was in excess of the number allowed by "The Passengers Act." The vessel, which is foreign owned, was on her way to Bremen; but, as she landed passengers at Southampton, I will call upon the agents of the Company in this country for an explanation.

## LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY UNION.

MR. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the treatment of the labourer McNamara by the Edenderry Board of Guardians, whether it is to be understood that when a labourer has fulfilled all the conditions prescribed by law to obtain a cottage and plot of ground it is open to the Board of Guardians without reason to ignore his claim, and give possession to another labourer who has taken no steps towards having a cottage erected; and whether, since the Local Government Board have constantly interfered with the discretion of Boards of Guardians in Ireland on other matters, they will use in this case their discretionary powers of control, and cause the Edenderry Board of Guardians to reconsider this case, with a view to determining the present tenant's occupation and the restoration of McNamara to the house which was built on his representation?

MR. J. MORLEY: Under the existing law the Board of Guardians may act in the manner referred to in the question. The course adopted by the Guardians is, however, contrary to the spirit and intention of the Labourers' Acts, and when complaints respecting the action of Boards of Guardians in this respect are made the Local Government Board inform them to this effect, and point out that by adhering to their decision the object of the Act would be defeated. A communication in this sense will be addressed to the Edenderry Guardians.

## LAND REGISTRY IN IRELAND.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether tenant purchasers who bought prior to the passing of the Registration of Title (Ireland) Act are obliged, when registering their title under that Act, to pay the cost of registry searches, whereas in the case of purchasers since the Act the titles are registered by the Land Commission without any expense to the purchasers; whether a great deal of the delay in answering requisitions on title has arisen owing to this cause; and whether, in order to facilitate registration, and in view of the fact that the Act imposes on prior purchasers a burden not contemplated by them when purchasing, it would be possible to deal with such purchasers so far as the cost of searches is concerned in the same manner as purchasers subsequent to the Act are dealt with?

MR. J. MORLEY: In the cases of tenants who have completed their purchases since the passing of the Act, these are forthwith registered without expense of searches, no searches being necessary. In the cases of sales completed before the passing of the Act, the cost of searches, amounting generally, I understand, to a few shillings only, and of clearing the title, if there has been a devolution, falls on the applicant, unless he has sent in his application through the Land Commission, who are authorised to have the searches made without charge. One thousand two hundred and thirty-four applications of this sort have been filed by the Land Commission, while 7,762 purchasers have lodged applications themselves. It is probable that some of the delay in answering requisitions is caused by the unwillingness of applicants to incur the cost of searches. As regards the cases of purchasers prior to the passing of the Act, and the possibility of freeing them from the cost of searches, which is being done in many cases by the Land Commission, it seems to be a question for the Treasury whether all such cases shall be treated in this way.

### AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

**Mr. MAURICE HEALY**: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether there has been any change within the past 12 months in the practice of the American Post Office in the selection of vessels for the carriage of mails from America to the United Kingdom; and whether it is the fact that whereas until recently the mails were despatched from New York by the vessel having the fastest record, whether sailing to Liverpool or Southampton, the mails are now in all cases sent to Southampton unless in the case of letters specially addressed?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: Now that there are packets sailing under the American flag, the United States Post Office does not always select in absolute accordance with the records of the respective steamers. When, for instance, the *Paris* or *New York* sails with the *Teutonic* or *Majestic*, and the disparity of speed is not great, the United States Post Office sends the bulk of the mails by the American packet, and the Irish and specially addressed letters by the English steamer; but when there is a marked difference between the speed of two steamers, the faster takes the bulk mails, whether bound for Liverpool or for Southampton.

### PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

**Mr. CHAPLIN** (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, in reference to a letter from the Colonial Office to the Board of Agriculture, dated 26th April, 1894, in which Lord Ripon states—

> "That he has great difficulty in accepting the view that it is merely a type of contagious pleuro-pneumonia, and that it is not a disease due to the hardships and exposure of the journey to this country. That he regrets, therefore, that the Board have not felt themselves in a position to accept the recommendation in the letter from this Department of the 15th ultimo, that the restrictions should be removed on the opening of the trade for the approaching season. . . . That, as he understands that the importation of store cattle does not usually begin till July or August, he hopes that the period of special examination which the Board propose to fix will not be extended beyond the middle of June, so as to allow time for making arrangements for that trade after the expiry of the period if no further suspicious cases should be found;"

and whether a reply has been sent by his instructions to that letter, what is the date and the nature of that reply, and whether he will lay it upon the Table? At the same time I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the facts disclosed in the correspondence between the Board of Agriculture and the Colonial Office recently laid upon the Table, that a case of undoubted pleuro-pneumonia was found in an animal landed at Deptford in this country from Canada on the 22nd of October last, not seven months ago, and that the Board, in their letter of the 15th of August, 1893, have pointed out that that disease may remain undetected for a period of 15 months, he will reconsider his determination to exempt Canadian animals from slaughter at the ports, provided that no case of disease is disclosed by the special examination which is to commence on the 18th of this month, but which is not to be protracted?

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE** (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): No reply has as yet been sent to the letter to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, and I do not know that any will be necessary. If I find that a reply is expected and would be desirable, I will certainly include it in any further Papers to be laid before the House. Nothing has occurred during the past three weeks which leads me to modify the statement I made to the House on this subject on the 23rd ultimo, and with reference to the period of incubation, I may refer the right hon. Gentleman to the reply I recently made to the hon. Member for North Down, when I stated that some of the witnesses examined by the Committee of 1888 are said to have asserted that they had known cases of the development of the disease after no less a period than 15 months, but that no properly authenticated case of the kind was known to the veterinary officers of my Department. The evidence of those officers before the Committee points to a very much shorter period as necessary for safety.

**Mr. CHAPLIN**: Arising out of the question, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman what period of freedom from any case of imported disease is, in the opinion of the Department, necessary before Canadian cattle can be landed without being at once slaughtered and without exposing the cattle in this country to the risk of disease?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I must ask the right hon. Gentleman to put that question on the Paper.

**Mr. FIELD** (Dublin, St. Patrick's): Has there been any conflict of opinion among the Veterinary Authorities on the subject dealt with in his answer?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: No, Sir; they are unanimous in the opinion.

**Major RASCH**: Has not a case of anthrax recently occurred in South Essex?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I do not see how that arises out of the question on the Paper.

## INSANITY IN IRELAND.

**Dr. KENNY** (Dublin, College Green): On behalf of the hon. Member for Waterford I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has observed that the Special Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics on the alleged increase of insanity, recently presented, conflicts with their statutory Reports, annually laid before Parliament, on the subject of increase, and whether any explanation of the difference can be given; and whether he will lay upon the Table the Reports of the resident medical superintendents of the several district lunatic asylums, upon which the special Report in question has been founded, for the information of hon. Members who take an interest in the subject?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I regret I am not in a position to reply to this question to-day, as owing to the absence of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums from Dublin there has been some delay in communicating with them.

## ENFIELD LOCK BUILDING WORKS.

**Captain BOWLES** (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why men employed in the building works department at Enfield Lock are being discharged and their places filled by contractors' men?

**Mr. WOODALL** (who replied) said: A few men have been discharged from the buildings works department at Enfield Lock because there is not sufficient work for them. None have been replaced by contractors' workmen.

## SICK PAY IN THE CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT.

**Mr. CALDWELL** (Lanark, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the salary for over seven months (8th February to 13th September, 1893) of Andrew D. Murray, an officer of Customs, has not yet been paid; whether he will now order payment; and whether, as this officer has now fully regained his health, he will order his re-instatement to suitable duty in the Customs, in accordance with the Treasury Minute of 27th August, 1889, which states that an officer may be recalled to duty on his health being restored?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: No salary is due to Mr. Andrew D. Murray, formerly boatman in the Customs. He had been continuously absent from duty on account of illness since the 24th of September, 1892, and his pay ceased from the 8th of February, 1893. He was discharged from the Service with the gratuity for which his service qualified him on the ground that he was medically certified to be incapable of performing his duties. There is no intention to re-employ him.

## TRAWLERS IN THE FIRTH OF CLYDE.

**Mr. WASON** (Ayrshire, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that beam trawlers have been constantly at work during the winter months within the prescribed limits in the Firth of Clyde; and that, on the 27th of April, a fisherman, by name William Leckie, lost lines of the value of £6 by beam trawlers; and whether he will take steps to see that the law is enforced, and that the owners of beam trawlers are made amenable to justice for infringing the law?

*__Mr. J. B. BALFOUR__ (who replied) said: The Fishery Board inform me that the commander of the *Vigilant* reports to them that if the beam trawlers have been constantly at work during the winter months he has not heard of it, though he has inquired at the visited ports; neither has he observed any trawlers at sea except sailing trawlers of not more than eight tons as permitted by Board's bye-law. The Board have no information as to the lines alleged to have been lost by William Leckie, who should have reported his loss when it occurred, if he had good grounds of complaint. As regards the last paragraph of the hon. Member's question, I may mention that the Fishery Board have recently purchased a new steam cruiser for service on the West Coast.

### THE "COSTA RICA PACKET."

**Mr. HOGAN** (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign affairs whether the suggestion with respect to arbitration in the case of the *Costa Rica Packet* has been brought under the notice of the Government of the Hague; if so, how was it received; if not, and if there is no prospect of an early conclusion to the present negotiations, will he press the proposal for arbitration on the attention of the Government of the Hague, with a view to expediting the settlement of claims arising out of the seizure and detention of the captain of the *Costa Rica Packet* by the Dutch Authorities in the Moluccas?

**Sir E. GREY**: Instructions have been sent to Her Majesty's Minister at the Hague to renew the claim preferred by Her Majesty's Government in this case, and to press for the settlement of it without delay. I cannot make any further statement until the reply of the Netherlands Government has been received.

### STAGE CARRIAGE LICENCES IN LONDON.

**Mr. KEIR-HARDIE** (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state how many stage carriage licences are in force in London; how many stage carriage drivers' and conductors' licences are at present in force in London; and whether he will consider the advisability of regulating the issue of drivers' and conductors' licences so as to correspond to the number of licensed carriages, and of only issuing such licences to men over 20 years of age who have already had experience of driving on the streets?

***Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL**: On December 31 last there were 3,439 stage carriages licensed. On the same date there were licensed 6,454 stage drivers, 8,534 conductors, but of these very many held both licences, and act as driver or conductor, according to circumstances. The suggested limiting would have no margin for sickness or other causes of abstention from work; and as licences cannot be granted without due inquiry into character, &c., there would be constant delays and complaints that stage carriages were thrown out of work for lack of drivers or conductors, and unlicensed men would be employed. The minimum age allowed by law for drivers is 16, but no one is licensed by the Commissioner who is under 17 years of age, and this only in exceptional circumstances and for country districts on the special application of a proprietor, who undertakes to find the man employment.

### RICHMOND ASYLUM.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will suspend the apportionment of the expenditure upon Richmond Asylum by the Privy Council until the Law of Settlement has been altered; and whether he will arrange a ratio of expenditure based upon the number of patients coming from the County of the City of Dublin, the County of Dublin, the County of Wicklow, the County of the Town of Drogheda, in view of the fact that under the present proposition an increased burden would be cast upon the citizens of Dublin in connection with this asylum?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The increased accommodation in connection with Richmond Asylum is an urgent necessity and must be provided forthwith. It would not be practicable to defer the apportionment of the expenditure in the manner suggested. The mode of apportionment has received the careful consideration of a Committee of the Privy Council in Ireland, before which the parties interested were duly represented.

**Dr. KENNY**: The right hon. Gentleman promised me to give this matter his individual attention. Inasmuch as great injustice is being inflicted on the City of Dublin, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of reverting to the old system?

**Mr. J. MORLEY** said, the matter had been very carefully considered, and he thought the best possible conclusion had been arrived at.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.): What additional representation is granted to Louth?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I cannot say, but I believe it will pay a diminished contribution.

### RIOTING IN COUNTY ANTRIM.

**Mr. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the serious rioting which took place on last Saturday evening at Whitehouse and Whiteabbey, County Antrim; whether he is aware that two Nationalist bands, while marching down the Shore Road, were subjected to an unprovoked attack of stones thrown by an Orange crowd at Whitehouse; that an attack was made on the bands at Whiteabbey, where the police were compelled to fall back into the main street, after which they had to make a baton charge; that they were obliged to accompany the bands from Whiteabbey; and that both the police and the bands were persistently stoned for some distance after leaving Whiteabbey; whether any of the police or the people sustained injuries; and whether steps will be taken to bring to justice the ringleaders of the crowds who are so frequently attacking peaceable and orderly bands along this road?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: My attention has been drawn to the disturbances referred to, which resulted in the breaking of window panes and the infliction of personal injuries on both sides. One policeman was also struck on the head with a stone, but his wound is not considered dangerous. A number of persons can be identified by the police as having participated in the disturbances, and I am now in communication with the Law Officers as to the proceedings to be instituted. Under these circumstances, my hon. Friend will agree with me that it is inexpedient to prejudice the hearing of the cases before the Magistrates by entering into further details at present.

### LUNATICS IN LARNE WORKHOUSE.

**Mr. M'CARTAN**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a letter from the Secretary to the Local Government Board to the Larne (County Antrim) Board of Guardians, subsequently published in *The Irish News* of the 3rd instant, in which it is stated that there are, in the infirmary of the workhouse, 62 patients, of whom 27 are lunatics in charge of one nurse who is unable to go about the wards without the aid of a stick; whether he is aware the letter alleges that this infirm nurse is assisted by three female inmates of an inferior class, two of whom are of immoral character; that on the male side three old and infirm men are the only assistants; and that the Inspector found in a ward with five female imbeciles an infant, one and a-half years old, in charge of a pauper attendant who belongs to the same class she is supposed to mind; and whether immediate steps will be taken to make such nursing and other arrangements as the necessity of the case demands?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The facts are as stated. The Local Government Board in the letter referred to requested the Guardians to summon a special meeting to consider the question of improving the present nursing arrangements in the workhouse, and this meeting will be held on the 16th instant. The Board will await the result of the Guardians' deliberations before taking further action.

### LAND APPEALS IN CAVAN.

**Mr. KNOX** (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Commission in hearing appeals in Cavan acted on the Report of Mr. Bomford, whose connection with landlords in the county has been the subject of comment, or whether they obtained any independent evidence; whether he can say in how many cases recently heard in Cavan the rent was raised and in how many lowered; and whether any intimation of the general feeling against the employment of court valuers in places where they are connected with the landlord's interest has been communicated to the Land Commission?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Secretary to the Land Commission informs me that it has been found necessary to refer this question to Mr. Justice Bewley, one of the Commissioners, who is absent from Dublin. My hon. Friend must, therefore, postpone the question till after the recess.

## ATTACK ON A BRITISH SUBJECT AT BANGKOK.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is he aware that at the International Court at Bangkok, in May last, two Siamese subjects were charged with being members of a gang who waylaid and seriously injured Mr. Lillie, a British subject; and, on a conviction, were let off by the Siamese Judge with a fine of about £16 each; and whether, in view of the Treaty between Great Britain and Siam, which guarantees British subjects, under Article 1, full protection and assistance to enable them to reside in Siam in all security, the Government propose to take any action in the matter?

SIR E. GREY: Her Majesty's Government received a Report from Her Majesty's Minister at Bangkok on this incident, and also full reports of the proceedings with regard to it in the Consular and International Courts at Bangkok. The case occurred more than a year ago, and more than one question was put in the House of Commons at the time. It appears from the evidence that Mr. Lillie was stopped and subjected to some personal violence by several Siamese who had greatly resented the contemptuous expressions applied to the Siamese Government and nation by the newspaper of which he was the editor. Two of the Siamese concerned were brought up for trial and fined as stated, and half the amount was received by Mr. Lillie in compensation.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs is he aware that, on the 25th of April, 1893, in the British Court at Bangkok, a man, called Ahamat, was convicted by a jury of having been one of a gang who waylaid and beat Mr. Lillie, editor of *The Siam Free Press;* that the official medical attendant swore that the wounds inflicted on Mr. Lillie constituted grievous bodily harm; and that it was proved that it was the prisoner who stopped Mr. Lillie's carriage and struck him with the butt end of a whip; and whether, in view of the fact that prisoner was sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment with hard labour, although the Consul was bound, under Sections 6 and 49 of the Siam Order in Council, 1889, to administer justice in accordance with the practice of English law, the Government propose to take any action in the matter?

SIR E. GREY: The report of the trial does not show that Mr. Lillie's medical attendant swore as stated. On the contrary, he stated in evidence that the bruises had disappeared in six days. The jury found Ahamat guilty of a common assault.

## THE DE FREYNE EVICTIONS.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why the widows Cabalan and Moran and Mrs. P. Moran, evicted tenants on the De Freyne estate, have not been paid the amount of the bills they furnished to the District Inspector of the R.I.C. for hay, turf, and timber destroyed and burned by the constabulary whilst guarding the ruined walls of the evicted houses; and if he would undertake to have those people paid their claims without further delay, as they are now sorely in need of provisions?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am afraid I cannot add anything to the reply which I gave to a similar question addressed to me by the hon. Gentleman on this subject on the 22nd of March last.

## MEDICAL OFFICERS AT MOUNTJOY PRISON.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Monaghan, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many medical officers are at present employed at Mountjoy Prison, Dublin; what the duties were which they were employed to discharge at the time of their appointment, and what duties they now perform; what are the salaries paid such officers; whether these exceed a total of £1,000 per annum; and if any such sum is paid for medical attendance in any other prison accommodating only a similar number of prisoners?

MR. J. MORLEY: There are two medical officers and an assistant attached to the local and convict divisions of Mountjoy Prison, and their salaries amount in the aggregate to £910 per annum. The Prisons Board inform me that there is no other similar prison in Ireland with which to compare that at

Mountjoy; but they observe that the salaries paid for medical attendance in Maryborough Invalid Convict Prison are much higher in proportion to the average number in custody than the salaries paid at Mountjoy. With respect to the second paragraph, which enters into matters of detail, I shall be happy, if the hon. Gentleman so desires, to supply him with a statement of the duties referred to.

### BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Report of the Commission on Bovine Tuberculosis is ready for publication, or when its issue may be expected?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: I am informed by the Commissioners that satisfactory progress is being made with the Report, which may shortly be expected.

**Mr. FIELD**: Can the right hon. Gentleman fix a date, because I have been asking questions upon this subject ever since I have been in the House?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: I cannot add to the answer I have already given.

### IRISH RATE COLLECTIONS.

**Mr. TULLY** (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the present system of rate receipt forms and of checking rate collectors' accounts is inefficient in preventing embezzlement by dishonest rate collectors in different Unions in Ireland; whether he is aware that in Baltinglass Union the clerk has introduced a plan of having the rate books laid on the Boardroom table for the information of the Guardians at their weekly meetings, with the amounts paid during the week duly set forth; and whether the Local Government Board are prepared to recommend the general adoption of this plan, or some better one, by Boards of Guardians so as to prevent serious loss to the ratepayers through defalcations by dishonest rate collectors?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Local Government Board do not think the present system of rate receipt forms and of checking collectors' accounts is inefficient in preventing embezzlement of the rates, but that it is rather the inefficient working of the present system which has resulted in losses to the ratepayers in certain Unions. The Board have no objection to the adoption by other Unions of the system referred to in the second paragraph, but they do not think that its adoption would result in any real advantage such as would justify them in officially recommending it to Boards of Guardians. In order to be beneficial the system would require to be very fully carried out, and the Board are inclined to believe that in time the inspection by the Guardians might become purely formal. It will be found, as a rule, that defalcations on the part of collectors are rare in well-managed Unions where there is a competent and careful clerk.

### BOARD OF WORKS LAND IN LEITRIM.

**Mr. TULLY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has inquired what are the grounds on which the Board of Works officials refused to let to Thomas Butler, of Jamestown, County Leitrim, the portion of land in their control which was lately in the possession of Mrs. Reynolds, who emigrated in March last to America; and whether he is prepared to state the reasons, if any, for such refusal?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: The Board of Works inform me that they have arranged to let the land in question to a tenant whom, after full inquiry, they considered more suitable than Mr. Butler, and whose garden immediately adjoins it.

### LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE NENAGH UNION.

**Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN** (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that, in the case of the recent Local Government Board inquiry into the scheme for labourers' cottages of the Nenagh Board of Guardians, a site for a proposed cottage on the lands of one Thomas Moloney, in the Ballina division, was objected to in the Inspector's Report, on the ground that, in his opinion, the selection of the site was injudicious, and that, if the plot was acquired, the occupier would, in all probability, be subjected to considerable annoyance; whether he is aware the cottage in this case was sought to be provided by the Guardians (acting on the representation of 12 ratepayers in the district) for a labourer, named Hackett, who, with a family of five, has been obliged to live in lodgings for the past two years, there being no house available in the district; whether the Guardians, by resolution of their Board on the 26th of April last, appealed to the Local Government Board not to abandon this site for a cottage, stating that, in their opinion, there were no just grounds for so doing; that the objections raised by Moloney on the inquiry were not in accordance with the facts; and that they (the Guardians) were satisfied that there were no grounds for the suggestion that Moloney, in the event of the cottage being built and occupied by Hackett, would be (as the Report stated) subject to any annoyance; and if he will advise the Local Government Board to respond to the Guardians' request for a further inquiry into the facts of this case?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The facts stated in the question are correct, but the main fact of the case has been omitted—namely, that the person for whom the cottage is proposed was evicted from a house on the same lands about three years ago. The Local Government Board Inspector considered that the selection of a site for a cottage for this man on this particular farm was injudicious, as, in all probability, the occupier of the farm would be subjected to annoyance if the labourer who had been evicted were put back on his lands.

## FIELD HOSPITAL TRAINING.

Mr. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley): On behalf of the hon. Member for Peterborough, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the orders given by the Secretary of State for War for field hospital training to be given at Aldershot, similar orders will be given for field hospital training in India?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: In accordance with the reply given to my hon. Friend on the 21st December last a copy of the scheme for the field hospital training to be given at Aldershot has been sent for the consideration of the Government of India.

## THE MANNING OF OUR MERCANTILE MARINE.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the grave import to our shipping industry of any inquiry into the question of the manning of the ships of our Mercantile Marine; whether he will now state definitely the precise scope of the inquiries to be instituted by the proposed Committee on Undermanning; what is to be the constitution of the Committee; whether it is, or is not, his intention to ask Members of Parliament to serve on that Committee; and whether, in such case, the different branches of the shipping industry will be duly represented?

*Mr. MUNDELLA: Yes, Sir. We are fully aware of the grave import of the inquiry into the question of the manning of the ships of our Mercantile Marine, and I am glad to be able to state that we have undertaken this inquiry with the assent of all parties interested. The Committee will be appointed to inquire and report whether any amendment of the existing law is necessary in order to secure as regards British ships—(1) The proper manning of such ships; (2) The detention of such ships if proceeding or about to proceed to sea undermanned from ports in the United Kingdom; (3) The punishment of persons sending or taking or being parties to sending or taking such ships to sea undermanned. It will consist of four Members of Parliament:—The hon. Member for Cardiff, Chairman; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ormskirk Division of Lancashire; the hon. Member for West Perth; and the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. Two representatives of the Board of Trade—Sir Digby Murray, baronet, and Mr. Ingram B. Walker, Assistant Secretary of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade. Three representatives of shipowners—Mr. Thomas Scrutton, Mr. G. A. Laws, Mr. Charles Barrie. Two representatives of seamen and firemen—Mr. T. B. Butcher (Hull) and Mr. Thomas Connorty (Liverpool). One representative of shipmasters — Mr. William Davidson (South Shields). One certificated engineer—Mr. James Orr Sinclair. A barrister of high standing—Mr. F. W. Raikes, Q.C., LL.D. I had hoped to be able to arrange for one representative of the underwriters, but I am at present without the advice enabling me to do so.

Mr. CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): Seeing the great importance of this subject, will the right hon. Gentleman appoint a second representative to represent the shipmasters and officers, and also a second representative to represent the engineers and firemen, both of whom shall be practical men who have been at sea? I would further ask whether, as the three shipowners do not represent cargo steamers, the right hon. Gentleman will appoint a shipowner to represent this class of vessel?

*Mr. MUNDELLA: The hon. Gentleman asks me to largely increase the size of this Committee. There are five shipowners on the Committee, three of them nominated by agreement with the shipowners of London, Liverpool, Glasgow, and elsewhere, and the shipowners themselves are quite content with the shipowners who represent them on the Committee. With respect to the engineers, they are quite content with the certificated engineers nominated by the Engineers' Union. I think the sea officers have also nominated a representative. This is a deliberative Committee of Inquiry, consisting of 15 Members, and it would be impossible to add to that number without making it practically unworkable. All parties are satisfied with the representatives on the Committee.

Mr. WEIR: What Society does Mr. Sinclair represent?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Society of Working Engineers—a Union of 12,000 men in London, Shields, Glasgow, and elsewhere. He is their selection.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL asked if the Committee would receive instructions to deal with the case of other than British ships?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Committee have nothing to do with the International aspect, and the Government cannot legislate on the question of manning for other Mercantile Marines than our own. The Committee will inquire and report upon what they consider necessary and desirable should be done.

Mr. CAYZER asked if the right hon. Gentleman had not received requests for further representation from the Scotch Shipowners' Association, the Mercantile Marine Society of Liverpool, and other Organisations?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Almost every Society and every class want separate representation; but I think it will be agreed that the Committee is fully representative.

### WAR OFFICE CHEMIST.

Mr. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War who was appointed chemist to the War Office on the retirement of Sir F. Abel; whether Dr. Dupré was appointed as adviser only, and was already fully occupied with his duties at the Home Office; what, if any, is the control exercised by Dr. Kellner of the Woolwich Laboratory over the work at Waltham Abbey; whether the head of the Waltham Factory is a military man, with no scientific chemist under him; whether the deputy manager is not a scientific chemist, but a practical man trained in the routine work; whether the foreman, who was unfortunately killed in the last explosion, was a scientific chemist; and when was the Report on the former fatal explosion signed, and why has it not been sooner presented to Parliament?

Mr. WOODALL (who replied) said: When in 1888 the Explosives Committee was formed with Sir F. Abel as president, the distribution of the work of the Chemical Department was re-arranged, the ordinary work being taken over by Dr. Kellner, and the larger questions connected with explosives falling to the Explosives Committee. When the Explosives Committee came to an end in 1891 Dr. Dupré succeeded Sir F. Abel as an associate member of the Ordnance Committee. He is also the adviser of the Director General of Ordnance Factories when consulted on questions relative to explosives. I understand that Dr. Dupré's duties at the Home Office leave sufficient time for the required purpose. Dr. Kellner is not attached to the Ordnance Factories, and exercises, therefore, no control at Waltham. He is, however, frequently consulted. The superintendent at Waltham Abbey is a military man, but he is assisted by a staff of practical chemists with special knowledge of explosives. The Report on the former explosion was signed on April 25, presented on the 30th, and distributed this morning. I may add that Lord Sandhurst's Committee has been requested to make a full inquiry into the administration of the factories dealing with nitro-glycerine, guncotton, and cordite. The committee will report as expeditiously as possible, and the Secretary of State will then promptly consider what changes may be expedient.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Will the Report on the last explosion at Waltham be circulated among Members?

MR. WOODALL: It will be sent, in the first place, to the Secretary of State, who no doubt will have it circulated.

### DOYLE UNIONS.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has any objection to lay upon the Table a short Return showing the number of so-called Doyle or contributory Unions now existing, with their respective populations and rateable value, and also showing the method in which the casual paupers are treated in these Unions?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: No such Unions as are suggested have as yet been constituted.

### THE EXPLOSION AT WALTHAM ABBEY.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office what work, if any, will be found for the men deprived of work by the last explosion at Waltham Abbey; what were the qualifications of the chemist in charge of the nitro-glycerine at the time of the explosion; what sum, if any, will be received by the relatives of the unmarried man killed during the last explosion; and if, when the new buildings to replace those destroyed are erected, the work will be leased to contractors?

MR. WOODALL: It is hoped to find employment for the men whom the late explosion at Waltham Abbey has deprived of work. The chemist in charge of the nitro-glycerine factory is a Fellow of the Institute of Chemists and has several competent chemists under him. As explained in another reply to-day, the question of grants to relatives will be considered when full details are obtained. The new buildings will not be erected by contract.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: What compensation will be given to the owners of private houses whose property has been injured by these explosions?

MR. WOODALL: I must ask the hon. Member to put that question on the Paper for some day after the Recess.

MR. HANBURY asked if, in addition, to take the ordinary precautions imposed on private factories, the War Office did not claim to be exempt from liability for damage done to adjoining property?

MR. WOODALL: I must decline to answer questions of so much importance without notice.

### WAR DEPARTMENT WRITERS.

MR. MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a correspondence has been proceeding for upwards of a year between the War Office and the Treasury upon the subject of promoting the writers in the War Department to the position of abstractors and assistant clerks; and whether he can now state what decision, if any, has been reached?

MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: It is understood that a decision has been arrived at by the Treasury. I expect to receive it very shortly.

### STAGE PLAY LICENCES.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint, &c.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether any, and if so what, County and Borough Councils have delegated to the Justices their powers and duties, under "The Local Government Act, 1888," with respect to the licensing of houses or places for the public performance of stage plays; and whether it is competent for any Council, which has so delegated its powers and duties, at any time to withdraw such delegation and thenceforth to exercise such powers itself?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I have no information as to the cases referred to, and the Local Government Board have no authority in the matter. I may, however, state generally that it would appear that a power to delegate would include a power to withdraw such delegation.

### THE ARRAN ISLANDS.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution of the Galway Board of Guardians, affirming the necessity for relief works in the Arran Islands, owing to the extreme destitution now prevailing there; and whether he has yet provided for the institution of such works?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have received a copy of the resolution referred to. Since I replied recently to a previous question of my hon. Friend in regard to the state of things in the Arran Islands, the Local Government Inspector has again visited them, and, with the assistance of the parish priest and his curate, distributed the seed potatoes provided through the hon. Member for Northampton. The Local Government Inspector has found nothing to alter in his former Reports, nor anything that would justify the Government in asking Parliament to adopt the very exceptional course of specially providing relief works.

MR. SEXTON: Am I to understand that the Government think there are now the means of subsistence for the people in these islands until the harvest ripens?

MR. J. MORLEY: That is the best judgment that can be formed of the opinion of the Inspector.

MR. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.) asked if the answer of the Chief Secretary meant that the Government could not see their way to spend a few hundreds in instituting relief works in the Arran Islands at a period when the people of Ireland were taxed £250,000 for the Navy?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am afraid my logic does not enable me to see the connection between this extra taxation and the granting of a few hundred pounds to the Arran Islands. The case of the Arran Islands must be judged on its merits.

MR. W. REDMOND asked whether the Chief Secretary had received any information on the subject of the condition of the people of these islands from the Rev. Father McDonnell, the priest of the district, who had complained very much of the indifference of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is quite true I have received various communications from this rev. gentleman complaining of what he considers my indifference. I have not been indifferent. I have paid the very closest attention, and I have formed the best judgment I could on the

facts laid before me by officers and officials of experience, in whom I have entire confidence.

MR. W. REDMOND: Are we to infer that he places in this matter greater reliance upon the information afforded to him by the Local Government Board Inspector, who is only a stranger, than he does upon the information provided for him by the Rev. Father McDonnell, who has lived amongst his people all his life, and knows all about them?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am not sure how far it is true that this rev. gentleman has lived all his life there. He is the parish priest, no doubt; but the gentleman who was parish priest when these circumstances first arose died about three or four weeks ago.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will make further inquiries as to the advisability and usefulness of constructing two boat-slips which have been recommended by several persons?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am making inquiries to-day upon the subject, and any charge of indifference or callousness against me is entirely without foundation.

MR. SEXTON: May I ask whether the Report of Major Fair says anything either to affirm or deny the statement of the parish priest—namely, that of these people, or the small minority on the middle island, who are able to obtain work are now working for a wage of 2d. a day?

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot say whether it is true that they are working for a wage of 2d. a day; but no facts were brought before us which would justify us in coming to Parliament and asking for funds to start relief works.

## WORKING HOURS AT WOOLWICH.

MR. D. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydfil): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the changes recently made in the hours of labour at some of the Government Departments at Woolwich constitute a maximum eight hour day or 48 hour week; whether the men are compelled under ordinary circumstances to be at work every day during the whole time; how the hours are reckoned, and whether meal-time is included; and if a 48 hour week, what are the highest maximum hours in any one day inclusive of meal-time?

MR. WOODALL: The changes referred to in the hours of labour at Woolwich constitute a 48 hours week. Men are ordinarily required to be at work the whole time during which their services are required. In all cases the hours for leaving off work are the hours for leaving the shops or places where the men are actually at work. For coming to work, the hours named are the times for depositing the tickets in the ticket-boxes, which are placed as near as possible to the men's work. On five days the men work from 8 a.m. till 1 p.m., and from 2 p.m. till 5.40 p.m. They have, therefore, a free hour for dinner, and the actual work covers eight hours and 40 minutes. On Saturdays the work is from 8 a.m. to 12.40 p.m.

## THE DAIRY INDUSTRY.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it is his intention to appoint a Select Committee to consider the dairy industry?

MR. CHANNING: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been directed to a Motion I have down on the Paper for the appointment of a Select Committee? I put it down in pursuance of his reply to a deputation.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The hon. Member for East Northamptonshire has a Motion down for a Committee on this subject, and I am in negotiation with him as to the terms of it.

## OVERCROWDED WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

MR. SAUNDERS (Newington, Walworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will take steps to prevent the overcrowding of workmen's trains on the existing lines of railway in and about the Metropolis; and whether Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to recommend this House to amend its Standing Order by adding to Standing Order 181A, which provides that all new Railway Bills shall contain provisions for rehousing of the working classes, a Standing Order that such Bills shall also contain provisions that, if there is not sufficient third-class accommodation on workmen's trains, holders of workmen's tickets may use any other available carriages, that the Board of Trade may regulate the accommodation on such trains, and that a Company failing to comply with such regulations shall be liable to a fine of £50, recoverable summarily by the County Council?

*MR. MUNDELLA: The difficulty of overcrowding of workmen's and indeed of other trains on the lines of railway in and about the Metropolis is a physical one. The Companies do their best to meet the demands made on their accommodation, but find great impediments in the way of increasing that accommodation. If any specific case is brought under my notice I will look into it; but I have no legal or actual power to prevent overcrowding. I am not prepared to propose amendment of the Standing Order in the direction suggested by the hon. Member. I not unfrequently find at certain hours first-class carriages are overcrowded by Members of this House who prefer standing to waiting five minutes for a following train.

## PAPERS ON SIAM.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now prepared to lay upon the Table of the House the Papers relative to the so-called blockade of Siamese ports by France last year; and, if not, whether he can state what the reasons are for continuing to withhold this information in respect of matters which occurred so long ago; and at what date he proposes to lay it before the House?

SIR E. GREY: The Papers relating to the blockade will be included in the Blue Book which has been promised; the issue of this has been delayed till the trial of the alleged murderer of Inspector Grosgurin has been concluded.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES pointed out that this matter was concluded a year ago. Surely Papers dealing with the blockade were ready now?

SIR E. GREY: The blockade was only an incident in a much wider question. It is desirable the Papers should not be presented until they are complete.

## JUDGES AND RACE MEETINGS.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Attorney General what authority, if any, controls the action of the Judges in respect of their attendance or non-attendance at the Courts of Law; and whether any Rules exist stating the conditions, such as ill-health or otherwise, upon which such attendance is dispensed with?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar): The Judges make their own arrangements, and there is no controlling authority; neither are there any Rules in existence such as are suggested in the question.

MR. HANBURY: Is the Attorney General aware that a part-heard case was adjourned from Monday till Thursday; that the Judge was absent from his Court on both days, being present at Newmarket races; and will he direct the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter?

SIR J. RIGBY: I know nothing about that matter. I am afraid it would be useless to refer the matter, as the Lord Chancellor exercises no jurisdiction.

### EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed to take the Second Reading of the Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill during the week commencing 21st May; and, if not, whether he can state when it will be taken?

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I hope I may be able to take it in that week.

### IRISH CHURCH TEMPORALITIES FUND.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt are charging the Irish Church Temporalities Fund interest at 3½ and 3¼ per cent. on loans amply secured, the excess of the interest over 3 per cent. amounting to £18,000 a year; whether he is aware that other Irish Public Bodies under popular management, especially the Dublin Corporation, have been able to borrow in the open market at a lower rate of interest; and whether he will take steps either to induce the National Debt Commissioners to reduce the rate of interest to 3 per cent. or, in the alternative, empower the Land Commissioners to raise a loan at 3 per cent. to pay off the debt owing to the National Debt Commissioners?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I cannot, on the information before me, add anything to the answer given by the Secretary to the Treasury on Monday last. I will, if the hon. Member wishes it, have further inquiry made.

### THE BUDGET.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the provision in the Finance Bill raising the Death Duties on estates between £150 and £300 from a fixed sum of 30s. to an *ad valorem* duty of 1 per cent. will press very hardly on small farmers in Ireland whose farms are valued for probate at or under £300; and whether he will consider the advisability of so modifying the Bill as not to increase the burden on a class already severely weighted with rates, as well as indirect taxation?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am not aware that the change in question will press hardly on small farmers in Ireland, nor can I conceive that it will press hardly on anyone. The hon. Member must not forget that it is only when an estate is under £300 gross that the 30s. payment at present applies. If a farmer has property of £350 and £100 of debts, he pays £5 on the present system, whereas in future he will pay only £3.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that serious loss will be sustained by persons who have purchased reversionary interests prior to the proposed Finance Bill; and whether, in such cases, the application of the Bill will be made non-retrospective?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Persons who have purchased reversionary interests prior to the passing of the Finance Bill will not be affected at all if the reversionary interests are in property which has already paid Probate and Account Duty (see Section 17) (1). Purchasers of other reversionary interests will not be more affected than they were by the Succession Duty Act, which imposed rates varying from 1 to 10 per cent., or by the present Estate Duty, or by the additional Succession Duties of 1888.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will not the Estate Duty on these reversions vary according to the aggregate of the estate whereof they form part?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it is intended by the Finance Bill to allow owners of cottage property who, although not occupiers, are directly assessed to the Income Tax (Schedule A) under General Rule IV., Section 60, of the Income Tax of 1842, the benefit of the one-sixth abatement; and in such case, if he will cause such amendment to be inserted in Section 33 as shall make it quite clear that this is the case, and that the benefit is not to be limited to cases where the tax is charged or paid by the occupier?

SIR W. HARCOURT: The intention is as indicated in the first part of the question, and, if necessary, I will insert such words in Clause 31 as will make the intention perfectly clear.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered the practical results of carrying into effect Clause 8 of the Finance Bill; and whether, having regard to its results as they would affect the trade and industries of the country, he will abandon that clause?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am not prepared to abandon Clause 8, but I will consider any alteration or modification of it that may be shown to be necessary. There are some alterations which I think will have to be made.

### GERMAN SPIRIT IMPORTS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that a large quantity of German spirit (said to be purchaseable now at 8d. per gallon) is imported into Scotland, and is constantly conveyed from Scotland to Ireland, mainly to Belfast, in Irish whisky barrels previously brought as empties to Greenock and other places for that special purpose, and is then retailed or exported as genuine Irish whisky; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into these matters, and take measures to protect native manufacturers and consumers from such foreign competition?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have directed inquiry to be made into this matter.

### GRAND COMMITTEE ON TRADE.

MR. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government propose to send any Bills for the consideration of the Grand Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, during this Session?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I believe there are such Bills.

### TREASURY GRANTS IN LIEU OF LOCAL RATES.

MR. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the disproportion at present existing in the Metropolis between the annual value of many properties occupied by or for the purposes of Her Majesty's Government and the estimated value upon which grants made by the Treasury in lieu of local rates are calculated, he will undertake to make adequate provision in the present Budget for such grants to be brought more into accord with the values upon which rates would be paid if the properties were in the occupation of ordinary tenants?

SIR W. HARCOURT was understood to say that, in the absence of details of specific cases, he was unable to express any opinion on the point raised by the hon. Member.

MR. DARLING: But in regard to the public buildings, are they not taken at lower annual value by the Government than their real value? And are not the grants made to those localities less in consequence than the rates which would be paid were the buildings in private occupation?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am afraid I cannot discuss these facts now. It is quite true that in respect of Millbank Prison, having in view the proposal to erect working-class dwellings, I did authorise the sale to the London County Council for a sum less than the property would have fetched in the market.

MR. DARLING: And will not the result be that Westminster will receive from the Treasury a smaller local grant than it is fairly entitled to?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I do not understand that. If the hon. Member can supply me with any details I will look into the matter.

### PLURALISTS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can hold out any prospect that he will afford an opportunity this Session for taking a discussion and a decision of the House on the propriety of continuing the system whereby 439 pluralists each hold two or more posts in the Public Service and each receive two or more salaries or payments from public funds; and whether he will take into consideration the fact that Her Majesty's Government have appropriated to Government business the day which was already fixed for the discussion of a general Resolution on this subject, and will therefore give another opportunity for its discussion and a Division thereon, in order to avoid the necessity for discussing each one of the 439 cases as it comes up under the Vote in which it appears?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I should be very glad to consider any arrangement which might relieve the hon. Member of the necessity of making 439 speeches on the same subject.

### MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

MR. D. THOMAS: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state to the House the nature and extent of the facilities which the Government have promised or intend to afford for the later stages of the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill; and whether a Government five-line Whip will be issued, with freedom to the supporters of the Government to vote as they please?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Perhaps I may point out that the number of this question is 107, and if the supplementary questions be added the total for the day will be 50 per cent. more. This question deals with mysteries I do not pretend to fathom. My Parliamentary experience does not enable me to estimate the operation of a five-line Whip with freedom to the supporters of the Government to vote as they please. That belongs, I believe, to the doctrine of the correlation of forces. I always supposed that all Members of the House, including the hon. Member, always had perfect freedom to vote or not vote as they pleased.

MR. D. THOMAS: May I point out the position in which the Government placed us. A five-line Whip was issued to Members, and yet we were afterwards told we were perfectly free to go into the Lobby against the Bill. Can the right hon. Gentleman answer the first part of my question?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am not able to state what facilities the Government can offer.

### MIXED TRAINS ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

MR. FIELD: On behalf of the hon. Member for Waterford, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, in consequence of the recent Regulations of the Board of Trade as to the running of mixed trains, the time table of the Southern Railway line, which joins Clonmel with Thurles, is unsatisfactory; if the attention of the Board of Trade has been called to this unsatisfactory state of things both by the Public Boards and the Southern Railway Directors; whether the conclusion arrived at at a conference held at Kingsbridge on the 17th of March last, and attended by the officials of the Waterford and Limerick Company and the Southern Company, and presided over by General Hutchinson, was laid before the Board of Trade; and when an answer may be expected from that body?

*MR. MUNDELLA: Yes, Sir; the attention of the Board of Trade has been called to this matter, and they directed General Hutchinson to discuss the matter with the officials of the Companies and others. As a result, the Board came to the conclusion that some concession in the matter of mixed trains might be made in the interest of the Southern line, and they are in communication with the Waterford and Limerick Company as to how best effect can be given to that view.

### "PLANTERS" AT FERMOY.

**MR. MACARTNEY** (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any Report has been made to him of a resolution reported in *The Cork Examiner* of the 1st of May, passed by the Fermoy Branch, I.N.F., condemning the encouragement given to certain "planters" in the immediate vicinity of the town?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: A Report was furnished by the local police on the resolution in question immediately after its publication, and the necessary steps were forthwith taken to afford protection to the persons referred to, and to prevent any evil resulting from the publication of the resolution.

### DENUNCIATIONS OF LAND-GRABBERS.

**MR. MACARTNEY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution of the Ivora branch, I.N.F., of 8th April, published in *The Donegal Vindicator*, of the 20th of April, denouncing land-grabbers and emergency-men, and to a resolution of the Sarsfield branch, I.N.L., published in *The Limerick Leader*, of the 25th of April, denouncing and holding up to public execration, as land-grabbers, Timothy Riordan and Thomas Donnellan, T.C.; whether he is aware that Timothy Riordan has since offered to give up his farm; and whether any Report was made, as to these resolutions, by the Constabulary authorities?

**MR. DANE**: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, may I ask if this is not the branch which recently denounced another man?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The hon. Member must know it is impossible to answer questions like that without notice.

**MR. DANE**: I will place the question on the Paper.

**MR. J. MORLEY**: Whether the hon. Member does so or not, I may at once say that if the questions asked are intended to imply that the practice of denouncing persons in Ireland as land-grabbers and holding them up to public execration is on the increase, I wish emphatically to state that this is a mistake, for the practice is remarkably on the decrease.

**MR. T. M. HEALY**: Is it in Order for the hon. Member for North Fermanagh to put such questions orally and without notice?

**MR. SPEAKER**: It is not in Order, but I understood the hon. Member to say he would put the question down.

### FATHER HUMPHREYS AND THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

**MR. DANE**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a speech alleged to have been made by the Rev. Father Humphreys, C.C., at Tipperary, on Sunday, under the auspices of the National Federation, and reported in the Irish *Daily Independent* of 1st May instant, in which, commenting upon the Evicted Tenants Bill, he is alleged to have said that if the tenants, who had taken evicted farms, were to be permitted to remain in them the wild justice of revenge would set in once more in Ireland, and the assassin and the hangman would begin their operations amongst them; if so, is it within the power of the Irish Government to take action to prevent the making of such speeches; and what action, if any, has been taken?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: My attention has been drawn to the speech of the rev. gentleman referred to. I must point out, however, that it contains no statement which would enable the Executive to interfere, nor can the Executive prevent such speeches. It is a severe criticism of a Government measure, and no doubt it is the practice of some persons to predict certain consequences if the measure becomes law, but I cannot see that this constitutes any offence against the law.

### LUNATICS IN BELFAST WORKHOUSE.

**MR. M'CARTAN**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of inmates in the lunatic department of the Belfast Workhouse on the 14th of December last, and also the number of deaths of inmates there since that date; and whether he has yet come to any decision as to the desirability of holding a sworn inquiry into the conduct and management of the department, the mode of admitting patients, their treatment, and generally into the working of the establishment?

Mr. J. MORLEY; The number of inmates in the lunatic department of the Belfast Workhouse on the date mentioned was 505, and 99 persons have since been admitted to the department, making a total of 604 under treatment. Out of this number there have been 43 deaths. With regard to the second paragraph, I have received from Dr. O'Farrell, one of the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums, a Report in reference to an inspection made by him within the last day or two of the lunatic department of this workhouse. The total number of deaths in the present year represents, no doubt, a very excessive mortality, but Dr. O'Farrell informs me that, with one exception, the deaths were all due to natural causes. He further points out that to compare the mortality of a lunatic ward in a workhouse with that of a lunatic asylum would be manifestly unfair. Dr. O'Farrell carefully investigated the circumstances attending the death of the man Casey, about whom my hon. Friend recently questioned me, and he is of opinion that no blame attaches in the case either to the medical officer or to the night attendant. After a careful perusal of Dr. O'Farrell's Report, I do not think there are any grounds for directing a further inquiry to be held into the management of the lunatic department of this workhouse. He will shortly prepare for the information of the Guardians a report on the state in which he found the department, and make certain suggestions as to the selection of attendants in the department.

Dr. KENNY: Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the desirability of producing legislation as soon as possible for the removal of lunatics to more suitable places than workhouses? Do not the authorities agree as to the necessity of State lunatic asylums?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has told us he has had a Bill on the subject prepared. Will he, in view of the shocking state of affairs known to exist, push it forward as rapidly as possible?

Dr. KENNY: And are the phrases used by the Inspector sufficient to warrant special legislation?

Mr. J. MORLEY: There are many questions to be considered in connection with the transfer of lunatics. It is quite true that the Bill is ready, but the state of business in the House makes it very difficult to bring it forward.

### FROG'S MARCHING IN THE ARMY.

Mr. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the inquest upon Gunner Philpotts at Colchester, who died after being removed to the barracks by the military piquet; and to the verdict of the jury censuring a lance-corporal for allowing Philpotts to be frog's marched for such a distance; and whether, as stated, arrangements have been made by General Glyn to prevent frog's marching in the Eastern District; and, if so, whether similar arrangements will be made general?

Mr. WOODALL (who replied) said: The jury returned a verdict of death from "alcoholic coma," and censured the lance-corporal who had been in charge of the piquet; but it does not appear that he was to blame. It is only when prisoners are very violent, as was the case in this instance, that the frog's march is resorted to, and in this case the prisoner was given the option of walking quietly, but he would not. General Glyn has reported that he has given an order that this method of conveying refractory men to the guard-room should be discontinued if it is possible to control the men without it, and the military authorities, as well as the Secretary of State, agree in the desirability of its being resorted to only when prisoners are otherwise uncontrollable.

Mr. HANBURY: Will there be a discontinuance of the practice generally throughout the Army?

Mr. WOODALL was understood to reply in the affirmative.

### THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL.

Mr. H. L. W. LAWSON (Gloucester, Cirencester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps have been taken to render the Thames and Severn Canal once more available for trade and traffic?

*Mr. MUNDELLA: The Board of Trade understand that the proprietors of the neighbouring navigations have formed themselves into an Association, and are carrying on negotiations with the proprietors of the canal with a view to its restoration and maintenance. In the meantime, traders and others who desire to use the canal between Chalford and Inglesham are allowed to do so at their own risk free of charge.

**Mr. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): Is action being taken by the Great Western Railway, who are the real owners of the undertaking?

**Mr. MUNDELLA**: I believe the Company are for a time allowing the use of the canal free of charge until the Navigation Company is formed.

### VOLUNTEER CAMPS.

**Mr. TOMLINSON** (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is proposed to form this year at Aldershot, as in former seasons, weekly camps of exercise for battalions of Volunteers in the month of August; and, having regard to the necessity Volunteers in business are under to make their arrangements for taking summer holidays early in the year, if it is possible for the authorities to make known their decision on this matter either before or immediately after Easter, so that the attendance may be as large as possible? (The latter part of the question, of course, is intended to refer to future years.)

**Mr. WOODALL** (who replied) said: It is proposed to encamp four battalions of Volunteers at Aldershot in July and 12 battalions in August. Commanding officers of Volunteer Corps are required by the Regulations to submit their proposals for holding camps to the General Officer commanding the district by March 1 in each year, and his decision is communicated without delay to the corps concerned. As a matter of fact, the decisions were issued in the latter part of April.

### THE WALTHAM ABBEY EXPLOSION.

**Captain BOWLES**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the families of those men who have lost their lives by the explosion at Waltham Abbey will be provided for by the Government, and will not have to seek local charity as on the previous occasion?

**Mr. WOODALL** (who replied) said: The usual allowances will be made with the sanction of the Treasury. On the late occasion an appeal was made to the benevolence of the neighbourhood apparently in ignorance of the fact that any allowance from public funds would be given.

**Mr. HANBURY**: Were allowances made from the public funds in the last case?

**Mr. WOODALL**: Yes, Sir.

### MAXIM GUNS.

**Captain BOWLES**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the last order for manufacture of Maxim guns was given, and if any are now in the course of manufacture, and when they will be completed?

**Mr. WOODALL** (who replied) said: The last order for Maxim guns was given to the Ordnance Factories on February 5. It was for 23 guns for the Navy, and the order will be completed in about three months. One hundred such guns for India have just been completed, and are now under inspection.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: Have the War Office any Report as to the respective efficiency of the Maxim guns made in the Ordnance Factories and those made by the Maxim Company?

**Mr. WOODALL**: Yes.

**Mr. WEIR**: How many of the Maxim guns are arranged for the use of cordite?

**Mr. WOODALL**: I believe all Maxim guns are now made for cordite. The hon. Member, however, had better give notice of the question.

### SCOTTISH POLICE PENSION FUNDS.

**Mr. COCHRANE** (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland why, in allocating the Exchequer contribution to the Police Pension Funds for the year 1892-93, seven men were deducted from the Ayrshire force on the grounds of inefficiency; whether, in view of the fact that, after the inspection of the Ayrshire Police Force in June, 1892, and again in 1893, the Secretary for Scotland directed the Standing Joint Committee of Ayrshire to be informed that he had the satisfaction of certifying that the County Police Force had been maintained in a state of efficiency, he will state upon what information he acted in determining that seven men were inefficient in 1892-93; and what are the names of these men, and the nature of the causes which render them inefficient?

*THE LORD **ADVOCATE** (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan) (who replied) said: The deduction referred to by the hon. Member was made in accordance with the Regulations under Section 17 (b) of the Police (Scotland) Act, 1890, submitted to Parliament in June, 1893, and relative Circular issued by me to all Police Authorities on the 22nd of December, 1893. The communications to the Standing Joint Committee mentioned in the second paragraph of the question referred to the efficiency of the police force as a whole, and cannot be taken to imply that every individual member of such force was considered efficient. The deduction of seven men was, as it was intimated it would be in my Circular of the 22nd of December last, based upon a certificate furnished by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary. I do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by supplying the names of these seven men, and have already informed the county clerk of Ayrshire to this effect. The Secretary for Scotland has instructed the Inspector of Constabulary in future to communicate to the respective Chief Constables, at the time of his inspection, the names of those constables whom he considers inefficient.

MR. **COCHRANE**: I shall call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

### THE IRISH VETERINARY COLLEGE GRANT.

MR. **W. JOHNSTON** (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a protest from the Irish Schoolmasters' Association against the proposed alienation of £15,000 from the funds at the disposal of the Commissioners of Intermediate Education for the endowment of an Irish Veterinary College; and whether, for the reasons given in that protest, he will leave at the disposal of the Commissioners those funds which are absolutely necessary for the development of the Intermediate Education system, now increasing in usefulness and expanding its operations?

MR. **J. MORLEY**: I have received the communication referred to. But, having regard to the conditions under which Parliament has provided this money and to the results since its provision, I am clearly of opinion that no injustice can be done in allocating the £15,000 proposed towards starting a Veterinary College for Ireland.

MR. **CARSON** (Dublin University): Will it be necessary to have a Bill on the subject?

MR. **J. MORLEY**: Certainly.

### CHELSEA BOARD SCHOOL.

GENERAL **GOLDSWORTHY** (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether, with regard to the Board School proposed to be built in Block VI. of the Chelsea Division, on the plea of pressing need, he is aware that the School Board Visitor reports that not a single child in the block is absent from school for want of a school place; that no part of this district is more than half a mile from one of the seven surrounding free Board schools; that in four of the adjoining blocks there is an excess of 863 places beyond those required for Block VI.; and whether he will reconsider his decision in the matter?

THE **VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL** (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The pressing need to which I referred in my reply to the hon. Member for Newry on the 26th of April is not for ordinary school accommodation, but for free school accommodation. A representation was made last July in terms of the Act of 1891, claiming free education for 590 children in this block, and it was found, after investigation, that after all the vacant free places in the neighbouring schools were taken into account, there still remained 378 children for whom free places had to be provided. The available Board schools are, with hardly any exception, already full.

MR. **BARTLEY**: Is it not a fact that in the adjoining block there are 863 free places at the present time?

MR. **A. O'CONNOR**: Do not the parents of the children, as well as the School Board and Vestry, desire the sale of the existing site in order that a more suitable one may be obtained?

MR. **ACLAND** said, that hardly arose on this question. He would consider any particulars laid before him however.

### ESSEX FISHING GROUNDS.

**MR. ROUND** (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is now prepared to state what steps he will take in order to preserve the fishery grounds off the Colne and Blackwater Rivers from further injury by the removal of cultch, pending further legislation, if such be required?

**MR. DODD**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the meetings of fishermen and others at the East and West Mersea, Brightlingsea, and Tollesbury, Essex, protesting against the removal of cultch and consequent destruction of the fishing grounds in the Colne and Blackwater; and whether he has consulted, or will consult, the Law Officers of the Crown as to the possibility of protecting these public fishing grounds by making use of the Crown rights until other provision is made by law?

***MR. MUNDELLA**: I am taking advice as to whether the Crown rights could be used to prevent the removal of cultch from the public fishery ground in question, but I very much doubt whether, even if the law admits of such an action, effectual means exist for carrying it into effect, and, on the whole, I have decided that the best course is to ask Parliament to empower Fishery Committees to make bye-laws on the subject. I propose, therefore, to ask for leave to bring in a short Bill with this object at an early date.

### PENSIONS AT WALTHAM ABBEY.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD**: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if, in view of the dangerous character of the work undertaken at the Government Factories at Waltham Abbey, he is prepared to revise the pension scheme now in force?

**MR. WOODALL**: Sufficient time has not elapsed to ascertain the particulars of the cases in question, and the Secretary of State, therefore, has not been able to consider the adequacy of the pensions to which, under present rules, the widows of the men killed will be entitled. When the particulars are before him he will fully consider the subject.

**COLONEL LOCKWOOD**: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the compensation paid by the Government to the relatives of the victims of the last explosion was so inadequate in amount that it had to be supplemented from private sources?

**MR. WOODALL** said, he would be sorry to say anything against private benevolence; but he could not assent to the proposition of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, that the grants were inadequate.

### LICENCE FEES.

**MR. HENNIKER HEATON** (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he could state to the House what is the amount paid by retail licensed victuallers for licences in 1879 and in 1893 respectively?

**SIR J. T. HIBBERT**: The Licence Duty paid by retail licensed victuallers amounted in 1879-80 to £1,067,000; in 1892-93 to £1,486,000.

### THE STRIKE AT MESSRS. BRYANT AND MAY'S.

**MR. MACDONALD**: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department a question of which I have given private notice, respecting the trial at the London Sessions of Amelia Giffard for assault and intimidation in connection with the strike at Messrs. Bryant and May's match factory. Is the Home Secretary aware that Sir P. Edlin called Mr. Winch, Q.C., to the Bench and suggested that the case ought to be settled; that Mr. Winch replied that he could not advise the girl to plead guilty unless assured that she would not be sent to prison; that Sir P. Eldin said he could not give the promise, but the matter might be left safely in his hands; and that, in spite of all this, Sir P. Edlin remanded the girl for a week, and then sentenced her to 21 days' imprisonment from the 1st of the month; will not the Home Secretary, under these circumstances, order the immediate release of the girl?

***MR. GEORGE RUSSELL**: The notice of the question reached me only this morning, and I have not been able to consult the Home Secretary in the interval. I will consult him as soon as I have the opportunity of doing so.

### WADELAI.

**MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON** (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs whether he will lay on the Table a Report of the events which occurred subsequent to the departure of Sir Gerald Portal for Uganda, and up to the time of the occupation of Wadelai?

**Sir E. GREY**: Full information is on its way home. I can make no further statement at present.

### REPORTED MUTINY IN AN INDIAN REGIMENT.

**Mr. BRODRICK** (Surrey, Guildford): Is there any truth in the report that the 17th Native Infantry have mutinied?

**Mr. H. H. FOWLER**: I saw a report of the occurrence in this morning's *Times*, and telegraphed to the Viceroy for information, but have not yet received a reply.

### THE CROFTERS ACT.

**Mr. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state whether the Government would, immediately after business to-night, give effect to their oft-repeated promise by introducing a Bill to extend the Crofters Act to small tenants?

**Sir W. HARCOURT** replied that he was not in a position to accede to such request.

### MONEY-LENDING BANKS.

**Mr. YERBURGH** (Chester) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he was aware of the usury and fraud largely practised by certain banks, so-called, and money-lenders, and whether, with a view to protecting the poorer classes of the community, the right hon. Gentleman would advise the appointment of a small Committee to inquire into the question, with power to examine witnesses and call for the production of documents? He desired further to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would take action in the case of a bank, so-called, at Leicester which he (Mr. Yerburgh) had brought before the Board of Trade Department?

**Mr. MUNDELLA** said, he had only received notice in the middle of the day of the hon. Member's intention to ask these two questions, and they were too important for him to give an answer offhand. He did not think the Board of Trade had any power to interfere with persons with regard to charging usury. With respect to the bank which the hon. Member mentioned, that matter had been referred to the Solicitor of the Board of Trade, whose Report he expected shortly.

**Mr. YERBURGH** gave notice that on an early day he would call attention to the question of usury as practised in this country, and move a Resolution.

### THE FRIDAY SITTINGS.

**Mr. DALZIEL** (Kirkcaldy, &c.) inquired as to the arrangements for the ballot for the Friday evening sitting following the Whitsuntide adjournment?

**Mr. SPEAKER** said, that, subject to the general convenience, the ballot for the Friday evening sitting following the adjournment would be taken on Monday, the 21st instant.

### THE RECENT CRIME IN COUNTY CORK.

**Mr. FLYNN** (Cork, N.): I rise, Mr. Speaker, to put a question to you on a point of Order, with your permission. It is this: Whether an hon. Member is justified in putting on the Notice Paper of this House a question which involves and consists of a very serious stigma on certain people in a certain constituency, and when that question has been on the Paper three or four days, and has been circulated with the other Notices of Motion and Orders of the Day, and has been published in the newspapers, is it competent for such an hon. Member to take it off the Paper?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Has the question been taken off the Notice Paper for to-day? There are so many questions that I cannot call it to mind. But the hon. Gentleman is quite right; I do not think any question that reflects upon any individual or of set of individuals should remain long on the Notice Paper without being asked. It is in the power of the hon. Member to put the question on behalf of the hon. Gentleman in whose name it stands. I have no knowledge of the particular question, but, of course, if it comes before me, and it is not in Order, I will have it revised.

**Mr. FLYNN**: Would I be in Order in putting the question on behalf of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Arnold-Forster), his question being four days on the Paper?

**Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member for West Belfast is here.

**Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** (Belfast, W.) said, he was perfectly ready to put the question. The reason he had not done so was that on inquiry at the Irish Office he had found that there was no legal power on their part to compel the withdrawal of the photograph to which the question referred. He then, in order to achieve the object of the question, told this man that if he would hand over the photographs and the plate to the police, he would withdraw the question. He had received a telegram to say that he had given up the photograph and plate to the police, and he was therefore precluded from asking any question. But he had no objection whatever to the hon. Member referring to it if he desired to do so.

**Mr. FLYNN** said, in order that the House might appreciate the position, he would read the question—

> "Mr. Arnold-Forster.—To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the mutilated body of Donovan, the caretaker recently murdered at Glenara, was photographed, and that copies of the photograph are now being sold by a man named Wolfe, of Newmarket; whether he is aware that these photographs are being circulated in the neighbourhood as a warning to all persons of the consequences of breaking the Rules of the Irish National Federation; whether he has seen the photograph in question, and whether he can take any steps to stop the sale and circulation of this picture."

The hon. Member wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the man Wolfe referred to was clerk to the Magistrates, a leading local Unionist, and that the people had no connection with him?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: It is a fact that the body of the murdered man Donovan was photographed, owing, I am sorry to say, to some oversight on the part of the police; but there is no foundation for the statement that the photograph was circulated as a warning of the nature indicated in the question. The police inform me that the person who executed the photograph is Petty Sessions' clerk, and a Protestant, and of the same political faith as the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast.

**Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER** said, that, with reference to the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he was quite aware of the facts with regard to this man, and he wished to ask whether it was not a positive fact that these photographs were being circulated in this locality; and further, as showing the danger of this proceeding, the right hon. Gentleman was aware that only a few weeks ago two time-expired convicts were received with a demonstration and torch-light procession in this very town of Newmarket, these men having been convicted and sentenced to four years' penal servitude for battering nearly to death an old man for precisely the same thing as that for which Donovan was murdered?

**Mr. J. MORLEY** replied that he objected to this photograph just as much as the hon. Member, who was good enough to let him see it, but he failed to see any connection between the circulation of this photograph and the proceedings to which the hon. Member now referred.

### VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.) inquired when the Chancellor the Exchequer proposed to take a Vote on Account?

**Sir W. HARCOURT** said, a Vote on Account would be taken, he understood, a week or 10 days after the Whitsuntide Recess. Due notice would be given.

### SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House for Whitsuntide be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House, and many be entered upon at any hour, though opposed.—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [7th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said that, in rising to resume the Debate, he wished most emphatically and particularly to associate himself with what had fallen from the Member for Barnard Castle and other hon. Members with regard to the reason why this Bill came before them. The Bill in its present form was necessary on account of the abnormal expenditure on warlike preparations during a time of peace. He was not, of course, about to enter into the policy of that. The course taken by the late Government in that respect and against which they on that (the Liberal) side of the House protested at the time was a precedent which had to a certain extent been followed, as regarded this expenditure, by their successors, and speaking as one of the supporters of the present Government he would only say that it had been taken on what were no doubt good reasons to them; but as they had followed that course, it lay upon them some responsibility to see that upon any suitable occasion they joined, and sought the opportunity for joining, so far as this country was concerned, in any step that might put an end to what he would venture to call an insane rivalry in armaments. He joined in the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Aberdeen the other evening in doubting very much that if this money had had to be raised by personal visits of a rate collector to the electors or in the ancient form of a Poll Tax, whether this policy would have received the assent of the House of Commons. Passing from that he wished to emphasise the vital distinction between the mode in which the matter was dealt with by the late Government and had been dealt with by the present Government as regarded the discharge of the debt incurred. In this connection the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, used not long ago, could not be too much emphasised. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The Secretary to the Admiralty has said that he is sure that if I had known that our naval defence programme was not to be an exceptional effort I should not have taken the particular financial step that I did take. I think he is right. I admit we did consider it to be an exceptional effort. We were wrong. At that time no one thought it would be necessary to make additional proposals like those now made, and I make a present to my political opponents of this statement: that had we foreseen the final result we should not have taken the particular financial steps we did take."

That was very frank, and what might have been expected from the right hon. Gentleman, but he differed with him entirely in saying that no one thought it would be necessary to make additional proposals. The right hon. Gentleman was warned at the time, from the other side of the House, that these would not be the last proposals which would have to be made, but that they would beget other proposals, which had turned out to be the case. He ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman gave away his whole case when he made that statement. Of course, he was not primarily complaining of the way in which the money was spent by the last Government, but of the way in which the money was raised. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the late Government made a blunder in their financial policy, and this could not receive too emphatic condemnation in that House and in the country. He said that because he saw that the principal organ of the late Government, *The Times*, had suggested that no difficulty at all would have arisen now if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had provided for the increased expenditure by a terminable loan. No doubt the present Government would have experienced no difficulty had it followed the evil example of its predecessor; but its successor would have felt the difficulty, just as the present Government had felt it in consequence of the financial policy of its predecessor. He endorsed entirely what Lord Spencer said in the House of Lords when he said, with reference to the proposed expenditure on the Navy—

> "We have not taken more money than we can spend in the year."

That was the sound financial and even constitutional ground to proceed upon, and it was the right policy for any Government to pursue. Coming to the Bill itself, he could not help noticing that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Opposition showed a shyness in discussing that portion of it which dealt with the Income Tax. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer had alluded to it, but it was hard to discover what his real attitude was with regard to it. Did hon. Gentlemen object to the extension of abatements on incomes below £500? The late Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to treat it as if it would be dangerous to offer any opposition to the proposal, but condemned it by implication. The right hon. Gentleman quoted something which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had once said on the subject of the Income Tax, but it was easy to quote from the speeches of the late Prime Minister, who had been a prominent political personage and a leading Member of the House for over 60 years. He should like to know the precise circumstances in which the speech had been made and to have seen the context in which the passage occurred, because it was always difficult to convict the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian of inconsistency. But considering the increase in wealth and the rise in the standard of comfort, he believed that the abatement would bring the Income Tax to the same proportion to incomes generally and the demands on them as it was previously. It ought to be clearly understood that every man who supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for Thirsk was voting against the abatement on incomes under £500. No remark as to "shyness" in opposing the Budget proposals applied, however, to the way in which the increase of Beer and Spirit Duties had been met. He thought that "the trade"—to use the expression of the hon. Member for Mid Armagh—might feel well satisfied that their case had been amply represented to the House in the discussion. Several hon. Members had frankly avowed that they spoke for "the trade." It had hardly been suggested that the extra duty on beer and spirits would fall upon the consumer, and therefore they might reasonably expect that the argument would not be used that this was a proposal to tax the poor man's beer or spirits. No doubt they would raise elsewhere the cry of robbing the poor man of his spirits and beer, but he wished that they would raise it in the House of Commons. One hon. Member showed the great profits that there were upon soda water, and asked why was that liquor not taxed? Well, when the Judges of the land and others felt it their duty to declare against the danger soda water was to the people, and when the House of Commons was, every Session, considering the question of amending the system of licences for the sale of soda water, then it would be time to talk of placing a tax upon it. It had been said that the profits of the great Brewery Companies amounted to only 6, 7, or 8 per cent.; but it must be within the knowledge of the House that these concerns had been bought at a greatly enhanced value by Joint-Stock Companies from the original vendors, and that these profits were paid on an inflated and watered capital. The hon. Member for Mid Armagh, who, if he might say so, held a brief for a great brewing firm in Dublin, said that it was not fair to place the extra duty on beer, because the shareholders of that firm had purchased their shares at a high premium. That meant that the shares of the Brewery Company were sold at a very high rate in the market, and, therefore, the holders received only a moderate rate of interest on them. But that was not the way in which the value of railway property was estimated and quoted in the Returns of the Board of Trade. They were not informed in those Returns that the dividends were only a certain amount because of the high value of the shares in the market. They were given the value of the shares as it appeared on the books of the Company, and that was the only fair way of dealing with the matter. The fact was, that they were witnessing, in the application of the joint-stock principle to the case of breweries, effects and consequences which had a most vital bearing on the social condition of the people. The effects of the tied-house system, which had sprung up during the last 15 or 20 years, on the well-being of the people and its bearing on the licensing laws might well be the subject of investigation by a Select Committee. He believed that, when the whole facts of the case were laid fully and fairly before the electors, the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would receive their approval. The Return obtained by the late Mr. Summers—whom many Members of the House would remember—showed that the licensed victualler now was but the mere paid agent of the brewers, and the article he sold to the public was not always of a high quality. Instead of the old respectable public-house or inn they found glaring gin palaces being erected in the towns and cities. He, for one, desired to do justice to all trades and interests, but he thought there were some evidences of a rising feeling of indignation at the bullying which was going on in that House, and outside it, in the interests of one particular trade. The vital and far-reaching character of the Budget, however, lay in that part which dealt with the Death Duties. It was first necessary to attain a correct appreciation of the basis of this Death Duty. He appreciated the great labour and the economic principles upon which the Budget was framed, and he desired to express his admiration at the fascinating lucidity with which it was explained. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the West Derby Division said the successors would have to pay not in proportion to the property left them, but in proportion to the wealth of the man who left the property. The hon. Gentleman must have forgotten the very emphatic words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he introduced his Budget as to the basis of the Death Duties. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The title of the State to a share of the accumulated property of the deceased is an anterior title to that of the interest to be taken by those who are to share it. Nature gives a man no power over his earthly goods beyond the term of his life. What power he possesses to prolong his will beyond his life—the right of the dead hand to dispose of property is a pure creation of the law, and the State has the right to prescribe the conditions and the limitations under which that power shall be exercised."

Nothing could be clearer or sounder than that. The successor did not pay the State. The State laid its hand on the *corpus* of the estate before it passed to the successors at all. He saw that this doctrine had been challenged by *The Times;* but the letter of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pointing out that at one time the State absolutely settled the succession and left nothing to the discretion of the deceased, was absolutely conclusive. The bogey—if he might use such a word—before the eyes of many hon. Members was the principle of graduation which had been introduced into this Bill. He would say at once in this matter that he held the virtues of industry and thrift to lie at the very roots of a happy and prosperous social system. He had no sympathy whatever with the wild notions contained in the speeches which one might hear any Sunday afternoon in Hyde Park. Those people made a very great mistake who fancied that these wild notions had any root in the country. When they got away from London and its miasma—when they got really down in the country—they would find that this kind of language had no hold whatever. He had the honour to represent a constituency in which more than one out of every six of the electors were freeholders—men who had saved their money, men living in their own houses. They would not tolerate from anyone any nonsense, any wild notions with respect to the spoliation of property or the infringement of the reasonable rights of property. Adam Smith had been quoted by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London; but Adam Smith was thoroughly in accord with the principle of graduation. His right hon. Friend said if they admitted the principle of graduation, where were they to stop? The hon. Baronet had a Shop Hours Bill, in which he was very much interested, and it was constantly urged by the opponents of the Bill that it should not be read a second time because it would admit a principle which might be very dangerous. The answer in both cases was that legislation must stop just where it was needful to stop. The question was not to be determined by high doctrines of philosophy, but by principles of common sense. On the ground of justice he had no hesitation in supporting the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The view taken of those proposals must depend on the opinion as to whether a particular form of property should continue to enjoy a special exemption from public burdens. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had much hostility to face, but he had on his side the great and unrivalled Mr. Pitt and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian; and he believed also that the electorate was on his side. It was said that these proposals would have a terrible effect on agriculture. He had a great sympathy with agriculture. He farmed a little himself, and ever since the days of Elizabeth some of his ancestors had been engaged in the cultivation of the soil. He agreed as to the danger of placing any unfair burden on the land. Agriculture was the greatest individual interest in the country, and he regretted that the Presidency of the Board of Agriculture did not carry with it a seat in the Cabinet. But in this Budget great and just remissions were made under Schedule (A), and the only burden placed on land was a charge which, if spread over the cultivated land of the country, would amount to no more than 3d. an acre. He had noticed, in this matter of the charges and burdens upon land, a curious reluctance to deal with the speech of the Secretary of State for India, and the valuable Return of his local taxation. In the summary of conclusions at the end of it was to be found this fact—that in the rural districts the average rate in the £1 of all rates in 1868 was 2s. 7½d., and in 1890-91 it was 2s. 3d.; that was to say, a fall of 14 per cent. The only fair test in the matter was the rating in the £1, providing there had been no arbitrary change of assessment, and therefore it was proved that the burden on land had been reduced. In all its parts it seemed to him that the Bill before the House was a most wise and sagacious plan for dealing with a financial situation which, after all, was not primarily due to the present Government. He had heard from the opposite Benches that it was an electioneering Budget. That was not an opinion shared by a periodical which he confessed he always read—namely, *The Economist. The Economist*, a most ably-conducted journal, stated on the 21st April—

> "The Budget is free from any electioneering taint."

That was very good testimony. He should like to say a word or two, finally, as to the manner in which this Bill was being met by the Opposition. The Amendment now before the House was the strongest form of disapproval which could be brought forward against any increase. It carried with it responsibilities of the highest kind, and he further believed such a course was unprecedented. It was not the course taken on the 8th of June, 1885, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol brought forward a proposition which defeated the then Government. An alternative proposition was then submitted, and the Leader of the Opposition, if he supported this Motion of an unofficial Member, knowing the consequences which would ensue if it were successful, was bound to give some indication of the policy he would pursue if he assumed Office. The money had to be found. The electors of the country were entitled to know what the Opposition meant to do, if unhappily they should command the most votes in the Division to-night. Whoever followed the hon. Member for Thirsk committed himself in the most solemn Parliamentary form to the proposition that he disapproved of the abatement of the Income Tax being extended in the case of those who paid on under £500. ["No, no!"] Hon. Members cried "No." Then, why did they not reserve that until the Income Tax Resolution was reached in Committee? They were now taking a course which would, if successful, have the effect of wiping the Bill out altogether. ["Hear, hear!"] That cheer he could understand; the former cheer he could not understand. Hon. Members opposite would, by voting for the Amendment, express a desire to see the unjust exemption of real property from its fair share of the Death Duties continued. He was very glad that the issue between them was so clear, because, as they all knew, this was not a mere Debate as to the merits of a particular Bill; it was in the highest and fullest sense one affecting the life of the Government. He had taken some pains since the 12th of March, when the Rosebery Administration came into Office, to ascertain what was the opinion of those whom he represented with respect to the Government. Their feeling towards the new Administration was that which was expressed by George II. to one of his Ministers. "Deserve my confidence and you shall have it." He acknowledged that this Bill gave the Government a far higher title to the confidence of their supporters than any mere promises in the Queen's Speech, of which they had far too many from the late Government, and he was not sure whether they had not too many from the present. He acknowledged that this Bill gave the Government a great title to ask their supporters for their confidence. He believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer in particular, and the Government in general, had not only deserved the confidence but had earned the gratitude of their countrymen by making these proposals, because he was satisfied that the provisions of the Bill were just, wise, and statesmanlike;

that they contained within their limits the promise and potency of good to the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. He should most unhesitatingly, and with alacrity, record his vote to-night for the Second Reading.

*MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Mr. Speaker, the provisions of the Bill now under the consideration of the House have hitherto been discussed chiefly, if not altogether, from the point of view of Great Britain, and especially of England. I think—and I hope the House will agree with me—that it is time that something should be said upon the subject from the point of view of Ireland, and I rise now, at the request of the group of Irish Members with whom I act, to give, as shortly as I can—for I do not see the necessity for any lengthy statement—the reason why we, as Irish Members, shall act as we intend to do at the close of this Debate. The House at large, and especially the Members of the Government, cannot affect to feel surprised at the fact that we take a deep and anxious interest in this financial question. For the last 30 years at least, since the Report of what has been known as General Dunne's Committee, every Irishman has been convinced that Ireland has been treated in the matter of Imperial taxation with shameful injustice, and from time to time during that period protests in one shape or another have been made against that injustice by Irish Members in this House. Last year the latest of those protests was made in Committee on the Home Rule Bill, and for my own part I heard nothing in the course of the Debates on the question which could by any possibility be described as an answer to the allegations then made from these Benches. With this conviction and those facts in our minds we are now called upon to face what we believe to be a wanton aggravation of the injustice of which we complain, and under such circumstances we should, in my opinion at least, absolutely stultify ourselves, and even offer encouragement to still further and foster plunder of our country, if we did not here and now show in the most decided fashion that we resent most deeply those continued attacks on the material interests of our country. Now, what are the facts of the present case? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had to perform the task—a formidable task, no doubt—of making up a deficit which, after certain manipulations of certain public funds, amounted to £2,379,000. Granting that Ireland ought to pay a proportionate share of that sum, I ask what is that share? My own opinion is that, calculated on the basis of the relative wealth of Ireland, it would be about 1-40th. An infinitely higher authority than I can pretend to be—Mr. Giffen—has put it at a much lower figure—namely, 1-53rd. I discard those figures, however, for the sake of the argument, as they may be thought exaggerated, and I take instead the estimate of the Government itself. Last year the financial proposals of the Home Rule Bill were based on the assumption that Ireland's proper share of the Imperial burdens would be something between 1-25th and 1-26th, or something over 4 per cent. Well, that figure being granted, the Irish proportion of the deficit—the 1-26th of £2,379,000—would be about £87,000; that I take to be absolutely indisputable. Now, what is Ireland actually asked to pay? With a desire to be accurate I asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few weeks ago to lay on the Table a Return showing what he expected from Great Britain and Ireland respectively in respect of the additions which he now proposes to Imperial taxation. He has not furnished such a Return, but we are, nevertheless, not without more or less reliable means of arriving at the facts. First, there is the gain from the Estate Duty. In answer to the hon. and learned Member for Cavan on Monday last the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself estimated the Irish portion of that item at 8 per cent. of the whole, or about £110,500. From that amount, however, he said a sum should be deducted, for the reason that, large estates not being proportionately so numerous in Ireland as in England, the new duty would fall more heavily on England than on Ireland. Let this also be granted for the sake of argument, and let a fourth of the whole sum be deducted. There will remain about £83,000, or within £4,000 of the total amount of our share as estimated by the Government itself. The next item of gain is the addition from the Income Tax. It is difficult to estimate Ireland's contribution to that item, but if I set it down for this year at

£10,000, I do not suppose anyone will accuse me of exaggeration. Here, then, we have got from the Estate Duty and the Income Tax alone more than the whole of Ireland's share of the deficit, that share, I say again, being calculated according to the estimate of the present occupants of the Treasury Bench themselves. Every penny beyond that amount, therefore, which is taken from Ireland in respect of the deficit is unjustly taken, and must be confessed to be unjustly taken. Is the Chancellor of the Exchequer satisfied with compelling us to pay our proper share as estimated by himself? By no means. He proceeds to dip his hands deeper and deeper into our pockets, even after we have paid him our due. He proceeds to raise the duties on beer and spirits. Every penny taken out of Ireland by this expedient is sheer plunder. But this is not all. In raising these duties he inflicts on us afresh the old familar injustice of levying from Ireland more than its proportionate share of the estimated gain from those particular increases. The total gain expected on this head is £1,340,000; the Irish share of that sum, taking again the Government estimate of last year, would be about £51,000. What are we actually asked to pay? Taking the latest Return I can get—that for 1892-3—I find that what Ireland paid in that year in respect of the duty on spirits was £2,241,000. Supposing the same sum to be paid in the current year under the existing taxes, the addition to it caused by the additional 6d. a gallon will be a 21st part, or £106,000. By a similar calculation, based on the same Return, the additional Beer Tax which Ireland will pay will be £50,000. Taking the results of the two increases together, Ireland will pay at least £156,000, instead of £50,000, or more than three times too much—in other words, more than three times in proportion to what Great Britain will pay—always assuming that Ireland ought properly to pay any of this sum at all. Now, of course, this particular injustice is that of which we chiefly complain, and the explanation of the manner in which it has been accomplished is as simple as possible, and it is as familiar as it is simple. The explanation of the fact that the combined effects of the new duties on spirits and beer will be to make Ireland pay more than three times too much in respect of the increases in those duties is simply that once more what I may, for convenience, call the popular beverage of Ireland, is taxed more heavily than the popular beverage of England. At present, under the system of uniform taxation adopted many years ago, the duty on 20 gallons, say, of beer containing two gallons of proof spirit is 3s. 9d. On the other hand, the duty on only two gallons of whisky, containing the same quantity of proof spirit, is £1 2s. In other words, as the hon. Baronet the Member for the College Division of Glasgow put it in this House in the year 1885, for every penny of duty which the Englishman pays for a given amount of alcohol in the shape of beer the Scotchman or the Irishman who drinks the same amount of alcohol in the shape of whisky pays from 6d. to 7d. Since 1885 this disproportion has been increased by the iniquitous legislation of the late Government, so that at the present moment the Irish drink is taxed at least seven times more heavily than the English. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to wipe away this disproportion? Not at all. Not daring or not caring to go to the entire length of the course marked out for him by his predecessors in his present Office, he mercifully contents himself with imposing on the Irish drink an increase of a taxation about four times heavier per proof gallon than that which he imposes on the English drink, leaving things in about the condition described in 1885 by the Member for Glasgow. The net result is what I have already pointed out. If his proposals are carried, Ireland will pay this year in respect of those new duties on alcohol alone £100,000 more than she ought to pay—or, in other words, £100,000 more in proportion than England. Now, what defence does he offer for fleecing Ireland in this fashion? I have heard from him only two excuses. First, he says that the drink taxation of Ireland per head of the population is less than that of England or Scotland. I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have offered an excuse so evidently beside the question. What does it mean? It means only that the Irish people drink less in proportion than the people of England or Scotland. [Sir W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear.] If that be so I am very glad, but the fact that they drink less does not get rid of the other fact that they pay more for what they do drink, and the right hon. Gentleman must know that this latter point is the one which he has to face. He says again that the extra taxation being so slight will come out of the pockets of the publicans or the distillers, and not of the consumers. That may or may not be true, and according as it is true or false it may be a good or a bad argument to address to Englishmen or Scotchmen, who in either case will keep the money in Great Britain, and will get a return for it in one shape or another. But what answer is it to Irishmen? Whether it comes out of the pockets of Irish distillers or Irish publicans, or Irish consumers, it comes out of Ireland and never returns there. I have heard one other excuse for this fresh burden on Ireland—namely, that it is to be imposed for only one year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself seemed at first to give some countenance to this notion, but he has since blown it to the winds. The right hon. Gentleman, on the 23rd of last month, spoke as follows in this House:—

> "All I am pledged to is not at the present time and during the inquiry into the incidence of this tax to make this a permanent tax."

SIR W. HARCOURT: Of course, as I proposed the tax in its original form it would have continued without any further action of the House of Commons; but in the manner in which it now stands it cannot be continued unless renewed for the next financial year.

*MR. CLANCY: The right hon. Gentleman has no doubt put a date into the Bill. But I must read the language of the Bill by the light of the language in which he has expressed his intention. I have not finished the quotation. He said—

> "I am not pledged in any way to make the Spirit Duty end on any particular day. I shall adopt whatever course may be most convenient and safe for the Revenue."

SIR W. HARCOURT: The hon. Member has not quite understood me. That was with reference to the objection taken to making it end on the 31st of March. I intimated that I should have to consider whether it would not be necessary to put in a later date of the same year. The duty is only continued up to the 1st of July.

MR. CLANCY: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to supplement his statement now, and say that he will not charge the duty next year?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have not made any statement as to whether there is or is not to be this increase of duty next year at all. That will depend on the financial arrangement of the year, and a good deal, also, on who is Chancellor of the Exchequer. What I have stated in reply to the hon. Member for Kerry is that it shall not be continued without the renewal of the tax next year.

*MR. CLANCY: I am content to leave the matter as it has been put by the right hon. Gentleman. We do not know what is to happen next year.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Nor I.

MR. CLANCY: Exactly; and I only express my opinion that it will be found convenient for the Revenue to keep this tax on. When has such a tax, once put on, ever been taken off? Such a circumstance has been unknown. The history of the last 40 years of British finance is fruitful in lessons on this subject. The favourite game of British Chancellors of the Exchequer in search of money to meet a deficit, or to provide for a war, or to build ships—but never, of course, to benefit Ireland—has been what again, for want of a better name, I may call the popular drink of Irishmen. The last Minister who pursued this game and made his bag as usual was the Member for St. George's. The result has been that the distilling industry of Ireland has been extinguished except in a few places. Fifty years ago there were nearly 100 distilleries in Ireland; I doubt if there are 20 now. Employment, of course, has ceased in proportion, and the farmers have also felt the consequences by barley being made almost as unprofitable as wheat. Again, Ireland is so overtaxed that the extra taxation has now this result, amongst others, that it constitutes the main difficulty in the way of a satisfactory settlement of the Irish National question. In return, we have not even the consolation of knowing that the consumption of alcohol in one shape or another has materially diminished. Now, we had reason to hope that the present Government at least would not add to our burdens and our difficulties. But with what appears to me at least a cynical contempt for Irish opinion, it not not only adds, in a time of depression, £250,000 to the taxation of Ireland, but it so increases Irish taxation as to increase at the same time the gross inequality of treatment in financial matters of which Ireland has been the victim at the hands of this Parliament. We think all this simply intolerable. Whatever other Irish Members may do to-night, I am authorised by those Irish Members with whom I act to say that they think this system of plundering Ireland ought not to be carried on any longer, and that they will give effect to that view in the Division Lobby by voting against the Second Reading of this Bill.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, there was an entire lack of argument on behalf of the Budget. There was, indeed, the cynical avowal that the classes were to be punished by special taxation for wanting a Navy strong enough for the country; there had been the bleatings of the Peace Society, the effusive gratitude of the Member for Woodbridge, which had left them in doubt as to what they were to be thankful for, and on the part of the new President of the Local Government Board there had been an ambling and shambling about among figures which had very little to do with the question. An important declaration had been made by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, between whose account of the Death Duties and that given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer an extraordinary discrepancy appeared, to which he would have to call attention. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said truly that at the present time the average charge upon realty in this country was calculated at 14 years' purchase, and the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Buxton) had said that under this Bill the average charge would be on 18 or 20 years' purchase, so that the difference would be only four years. If the period for calculation were increased to that extent, it was clear that the extra duty would amount to 4-14ths.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): What I said was that the average years' purchase would be taken at 14; that on certain classes of land—agricultural land—it would work out at 20 years' purchase, but upon other realty it might work out at 50 or 60. The point I was drawing attention to at the time was that the taxation would fall heavily in rural districts.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, it would not only be 50 or 60, but 70, 80, 90, or even 100. He would show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing to take not 4-14ths more, but four times as much. The Secretary for India said he referred to certain lands not particularly specified, but he had understood him to refer to the whole. At any rate, the 4-14ths by no means represented the general increase of charge under the Bill. Before going further he would admit that land was not unsaleable now, as had been stated. That was a figure of speech. Land was certainly saleable, though only a small price could be got for it. The hon. Member for West Derby had also failed to appreciate that, under the proposed scheme, the incumbrances on estates would be deducted before the duty was levied. The landed interests and the liquor interests, especially from the point of view of Ireland, had been extremely well represented in this Debate, and he now proposed to deal with the subject from the point of view of the tax collector. He was once a tax collector, having served in the Legacy and Succession Duty Department upon which the collection of the Death Duties devolved; and he might say that no Department had served the State better, and in no Department were there men of greater knowledge, integrity, and ability—of course, since he left it. He would like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he had consulted that Department on this scheme; had he received any figures or Report from them; had he utilised the practical knowledge of the Legacy Duty Department, or had he relied upon the practical ignorance of the Treasury in the matter? He thought the latter was the case, for this Budget bore in abundance all the marks of the handiwork of the presumptuous and ambitious amateur. Probably no branch of taxation was more difficult and complex than that of the Succession and Death Duties. Though he almost despaired of being able to make them clear to the House, he would endeavour to deal with them intelligibly with the indulgence of the House, hoping as he went on to receive some little explanation from the Treasury Bench. He would show that this proposal as to the Death Duties imposed a new and heavy tax on a new and false principle; that it largely increased the tax upon widows and orphans; that it eat up estates in many instances, and would extinguish the present generation of English landowners; that it greatly added to the existing complexity of the Death Duties; that it imposed duties which would be absolutely impossible of collection; that it rendered the final discharge of the Death Duty impossible for ever and ever, and, in the absence of such discharge, forbade the most urgent dealing with the most important properties; that it increased the temptation to, and the facilities for, the evasion of the duties; and that it would probably bring in a net result of little or no revenue at all, as he would proceed to prove. That was a very formidable indictment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that this was a kind of tessellated legislation. That was a very happy and apt term: it was tessellated legislation, added to bit by bit but always according to a definite plan and settled principles. Now came in the Chancellor of the Exchequer with a pickaxe, and he had made of this tessellation an absolute chaos and heap of stones, over which he passed the steam-roller of his democratic Budget. One word with regard to what the Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed as the "anterior title" of the State. According to *The Times* newspaper and his own recollection, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that the right of disposing of property by will was "the pure creation of positive law"; but in the speech which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done him the honour to send him, it was stated to be "the creation of positive law," the purity having disappeared. Had the right hon. Gentleman never read the 48th chapter of Genesis? Did not he remember, before any positive law of which we had any record, how Israel gave his son Joseph, by a testamentary disposition, a double portion of the land he had taken from the Amorites? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had begun too late; he had begun with the Civil Law of the Romans, established long after the power could be shown to have existed. The right hon. Gentleman said that the title of the State to a share of the accumulated property of a deceased person was an anterior title to every other. He said, "Supposing a man left £100,000, the Probate Duty, £4,000, had to be deducted before anybody got anything, and those interested got £96,000 only." "They never had a right to any more," Radical gentlemen opposite might exclaim, but they did not appear to see where that would lead. The beneficiary would have a right to £96,000; but under the proposed plan the State would take £6,000, so that tomorrow a beneficiary would have a right only to £94,000. Afterwards another Chancellor of the Exchequer might take 10 per cent., instead of 4 or 6, leaving the beneficiary only £90,000, and later another Chancellor of the Exchequer might take 100 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been ashamed, in fact, to stand up in that House and claim the right to lay his hand on every farthing of a man's earnings—to take his whole property. He would recall one of the last utterances of Charles I.—perhaps the only one he ever made worth preserving—before his death on the scaffold at Whitehall—

> "The freedom, rights, and liberties of the people of England consist in having of Government those laws by which their lives and their goods may be most their own."

That was a true and sound principle, and it had always been acted upon in this country until the Chancellor of the Exchequer, less liberal than the least liberal of all the Stuarts, told them that the principle to be now acted upon was that a man's life and goods were to be least his own, and that the State had the right to claim all the goods of every man who died possessed of property. That was not the law of England or the practice of the English people. The principle of English law was that what was contributed to the State was given as a benevolence, and it had never been allowed to be taken otherwise. ["Oh!"] He recommended the hon. Member who ejaculated "Oh!" to read a little Constitutional history, and to observe the very language in which these benevolences were accepted by the Sovereign. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had forgotten, or perhaps he was not aware, that the Death Duties of the United Kingdom were at this moment the highest in the world. He was sorry the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to remain in the House, as he might have been able to tell him one or two things; but perhaps they would be reported to him. A remarkable article was published in *The Statistical Journal* in March, 1889. It was impossible to compare all the figures given throughout, and he would, therefore, only take the most prominent cases, but in that article it was shewn that in France lineal successors paid only $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.; in Germany nothing; in Belgium, $1\frac{1}{4}$; in Italy, 1 4-10ths; in Prussia, 1; while in the United Kingdom lineal beneficiaries paid no less that 4 per cent.; and occasionally when Succession Duty came in they paid more. It was a very important fact, in short, that the Death Duties in the United Kingdom were higher than they were anywhere else in the whole habitable world. Take the case of Victoria which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had quoted almost as a shocking example. There, in 1891, the Death Duties amounted to £150,351 on a total Revenue of £8,343,000. Hon. Members would mark that this was less than 1-50th, but, on an average, it might be taken that the Death Duties in Victoria amounted to rather less than 1-40th of the total Revenue. What was it the Chancellor of the Exchequer was proposing to do? He was proposing to raise the Death Duties in this country to £13,500,000 sterling, which was not 1-50th or 1-40th, but one-seventh of the whole income of the United Kingdom. Yet the right hon. Gentleman said, forsooth, that he was going to be "much more moderate" than they were in Victoria; but there was another feature in that case. Take the percentages levied there and in England on property passing by death. In Victoria for 1891—and it was practically the same for other years—the amount of property passing by death was sworn at under £7,582,000, and the Death Duties amounted to the sum previously given, which was about $1\frac{9}{10}$ per cent. In previous years they were somewhat over 2 per cent., and it might be taken that the Death Duties in Victoria which had been held up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a shocking example which he would not approach were only 2 per cent. What were they in England? Even now, in 1892, on £241,500,000 of real and personal property passing, the total Death Duties levied were £11,000,000 and a fraction, amounting to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. So that, having taken Victoria as the model for this Botany Bay Budget; having appealed to it as a shocking example, and having assured the House that he was going to be "much more moderate" than they were there, he was going to increase the Death Duties to the extent proposed in face of the fact which the figures, unfortunately for him, disclosed—that they were there only 2 per cent., and already far less than they were now here. Then take the United States. The great historian Bryce, writing in October, 1888, said—

> "I have found no instance of a progressive Inheritance Duty or of a progressive Income Tax in the United States."

And then he adds—

> "Comparatively little resort is had to the so-called Death Duties—that is, the Probate, Legacy, and Death Duties."

The Statistical Society in March, 1889, published this:—

> "In the United States the duties upon successions were superseded by the law of 1870, and they no longer since that date exist."

When they did exist they were less than those of the United Kingdom. But here was this remarkable fact: that this democratic United States, having tried these Death Duties, had in 1870 to abandon them, and consequently at this day there existed no Death Duty whatever in the United States. He begged the House to bear that fact in mind. Therefore, neither democratic Victoria nor the democratic United States would bear out the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his proposal. He now wanted to clear up one or two ambiguities in this most ambiguous of all Bills. And the first question he should like to put was: Did the settlement of part of a property apply the vice of settlement and the extra 1 per cent. to the whole of it—did it, so to speak, "settlementise" it all? Clause 4, as the Attorney General knew, charged property with a further Death Duty of 1 per cent. Did that 1 per cent., if part only were settled, extend to the whole of it? Certainly the word "that" was not used with regard to the property, and the words "the property," according to the dictionary of definitions at the end of the Bill, would mean all the property. Did it mean 1 per cent. on that part of the property only, or on the whole? He thought it meant the whole, and he would tell the House why. Clause 3 dealt with cases where property passed upon death to persons other than the family, and excepted that from aggregation, and it seemed that settled property not thus specifically excepted must necessarily be included in the aggregate from which it was not severed by Clause 3. Take the case of a rich American coming over and domiciled in England leaving at death £10,000,000. Of that sum £10,000, say, was settled upon his wife. He wanted to know whether the further Estate Duty was payable only upon the £10,000 or upon the whole £10,000,000? According to his reading of the Bill the latter was the case. Then, if so, mark the ridiculous result: there would have to be paid on the £10,000,000 an extra duty of 1 per cent., or £100,000 of duty in respect of a £10,000 settlement! This was the Budget which they were asked to recognise as Heaven-sent, and which the right hon. Gentleman was said to have so lucidly explained.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar) said, there was nothing of the kind in the Budget. This was all a figment of the hon. Member's own imagination.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, it was certainly no figment of his imagination; he had quoted the statements in the Bill, and one of its ambiguities was that it really did not clear up the question. However, he would pass on, as he understood from the Attorney General's statement that the further duty was only to be payable on the particular part of the property settled, and would not be extended to the other parts of the property. He would take a note particularly of that authoritative statement. Another absurdity in the Bill which was no figment of his own imagination was that it assumed to levy a tax in so many words upon an admittedly false hypothesis in reference to infants—persons who had never enjoyed the property. The Attorney General would remember that in Clause 2 ($1^a$) property passing was described as including

> "property of which the deceased was at the time of his death competent to dispose."

That was the property; then the definition was given, in Clause 18, of the person—

> "A person shall be deemed competent to dispose of property if he has such an estate or interest therein or such general power as would, if he were *sui juris*, enable him to dispose of the property."

Did the House know what that meant? It meant that an "infant muling and puking in the nurse's arms" was to be treated as a grown man of 21, capable of doing that which he was not capable of doing—that if the infant had any interest or disposing power under a settlement he was to be treated as though he were *sui juris*, and as though he had survived to 21, and had disposed under his power. Would the Attorney General describe that as a figment of his imagination? He would not venture an answer.

SIR J. RIGBY said, the present law was not introduced for the first time by this Budget.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, this Bill made that provision in so many words. That, however, was only one of the preliminary ambiguities, and he would proceed to deal with another point. Paragraph 2, of Clause 3, provided in effect that property passing to the wife, husband, or descendant was not to be swelled for the purpose of Estate Duty by the bringing in of other property passing to other persons. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech, and still more fully in his Memorandum, explained that this provision was made for the protection of the "family" against the unfair swelling of the aggregation of property coming to it. This was the case with regard to the property of a wife, a husband, or a descendant, but what about property passing to a father or a mother? Under the clause such property was to be aggregated. Therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having told the House that he was going to protect the family from an unfair aggregation, turned the father and mother, so to say, out of the family. He (Mr. Bowles) thought that the Attorney General would have to put the father and mother into the clause again. Now to come to the indictment. The Bill levied a new and a heavy tax on property on a new principle. It was a tax on the *corpus* of the property, and not on the benefit taken. It took no account of the amount of the benefit which the beneficiary became entitled to on the death, and no account of the consanguinity of the person from whom the benefit was derived. No doubt gentlemen opposite would cite the Probate Duty as some sort of answer. The Probate Duty, however, in its proper form, and indeed in its present form, was a small duty levied by the State as the price for confirming the disposition of the testator. The main and heavy Death Duties must, however, be levied as they were at present—according to the benefit taken and according to the consanguinity of the beneficiary. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer fixed his eyes solely upon the property and not at all on the benefit or the consanguinity, and he was proceeding on an entirely false principle. The Bill also taxed potential value which might never be realised. As to ground rents, no doubt if things went on as they were now going on, and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be prevented from plundering the population, one might assume that the ground rents would return greater amounts as estimated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. London, however, might be sacked, and what would then become of ground rents? This was not only a new tax, but it was a new-fangled tax. His next objection to the scheme was that it greatly increased the charge on the widow and the orphan as regarded personalty. The increase chiefly came in as regarded personalty when the amount was over £28,000, but there it came in rather seriously. In the case of £100,000 passing to widows and children, there would now be levied a tax of £4,000, whilst under the proposed system the tax would be £6,000. On £1,000,000 the present tax was £40,000, and the proposed tax would be £80,000. In the case of realty the case was far worse. He would take the case of a poor landowner with a gross income of £1,500 a year, and a net £1,000 a year after paying tithes and insurance, which at 24 and 2-5th years' purchase (the present rate for ascertaining principal value) would realise £24,400. If the landowner died, and the widow took the property now, she would pay nothing; but under the proposed system she would have to pay £1,220. The House must bear in mind that this was not a rich widow, but the poor widow of a poor landowner, who was endeavouring to struggle along upon £1,000 a year. But now, if the poor landowner had by his economies saved £1,000, and settled it, this would increase the capital value of the property to over £25,000, and consequently there would be an extra duty to pay. If the property passed to children they would have to pay at present, if it were unsettled, £262 10s., whilst under the proposed system they would pay £976. If the property were settled they would pay the same as at present, but under the proposed system they would have to pay £1,220, or five times that amount. Now, suppose the deceased left, besides this real estate, over £1,000,000 of personalty, none of which went to the children, that would impart a different character to the Estate Duty, and instead of paying £262 10s. the children would have to pay £2,196. Thus, the child or the widow who inherited the property of a father or a husband would pay more as the property got greater. The result would be that it would be the bounden duty of every self-respecting son possessing common intelligence and prudence to ruin his father during that father's lifetime, and a similar duty would devolve upon the wife and the daughter. This precious scheme, therefore, not only carried sack and pillage into the homes of England, but also the demon of discord and of treachery. In certain cases the duty would actually eat up real estate and wipe out the landowners. He would take the case of the rich landowner with real estate which had been settled and re-settled in the ordinary way. He would take a net revenue of £200,000 a year, and assume the age of the successor at the average of 44. The sum on which Succession Duty would be now paid would be at 14 years' purchase, or on £2,800,000, and the amount at 1½ per cent. would be £42,000. Occasionally there were several devolutions in a very few years. In the case of the Dukes of Bedford there had been no fewer than four deaths since 1861, or in one generation. Now, four times the duty, or one duty on each one of these devolutions, would give £168,000 under the present system. Under the proposed system, however, the

£200,000 of revenue would have to be capitalised, and, taking it as before, at 24 and 2-5th years' purchase, the duty would be levied upon a principal value of £4,880,000. The payment that would have to be made would be, therefore, no longer £42,000, but £439,200. Supposing there were four devolutions in the course of 30 years, the £439,000 would have to be multiplied by four, and that would produce a grand total of £1,756,000 on an estate the capital value of which was £4,800,000. In other words, in the course of one generation the State would take more than one-third of the value of the whole estate in duty. If it went on at this rate the whole of the property would be gone in three generations. To tax real property or any property in this manner passed the limit of anything that had ever entered into the mind of any previous Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was, indeed, perfectly monstrous. No Eastern despot, no Robin Hood, not even Robert Macaire himself, ever conceived such a system of contribution as this; and when he considered how the Bill would plunder the widow and the orphan, and practically destroy estates, he could not help thinking that it threw into the shade everything that had ever been done in the way of highway robbery, and cast a reflection upon the ancient and honourable profession of brigandage. Could the House conceive the enormous complexity that would arise under this new system of Estate Duty? It was bad enough now. He thought that nobody who had not had practical experience of the Department could have any idea how complicated the present system was. There were now many instances of four or five separate Legacy Duties on one death. There was a famous case in which 99 legatees had died in the testator's lifetime, and each one of the 99 had to be followed out for duty. But things would be far more complicated were this Estate Duty to be levied, for each legatee would have to be followed out not only downwards, but upwards, for the proper aggregation of his whole estate. But, as a matter of fact, a large amount of these duties would be absolutely incapable of being collected. Clause 2 imposed the Estate Duty on property situate out of the United Kingdom, and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was asked by him (Mr. Bowles) how he was going to collect the duty abroad he said he could do so if the House would give him the power. The time had now arrived for the right hon. Gentleman to say how he was going to do so. He (Mr. Bowles) believed it would be absolutely impossible. Probably the right hon. Gentleman thought he would get the duty somehow or other out of the English executor. Perhaps he had forgotten, or did not know, that in cases where there was considerable foreign property a foreign executor was usually appointed for such foreign property, whilst an English executor was appointed for the English property. How was the Chancellor of the Exchequer going to get the duty out of a foreign executor? He (Mr. Bowles) would take the not altogether imaginary case of a rich German possessed of £20,000,000, with perhaps £1,000,000 in a bank here. When he died the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed to levy duty at 8 per cent. on the £20,000,000. The duty would, therefore, amount to £1,600,000. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid his hands upon the whole of the property in this country he would still be £600,000 short, and did he think that his astute German friend was going to leave his £1,000,000 in this country for the right hon. Gentleman to put his hands upon? Not he. There were banks in Amsterdam and in Paris and in Vienna to which he would undoubtedly transfer the £1,000,000. But there was still another portion of the duty which was incapable of collection. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that, in the case of personalty, he did not propose first to levy the Estate Duty and then to levy Succession Duty on the total amount without deducting the duty already levied, but that he did intend to do that in the case of realty. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, intended when there was an estate of £100,000 first to levy the Estate Duty of £6,000 on the £100,000 and then to levy Succession Duty not on £94,000, but on the £100,000 without deducting the amount he had already levied. In fact, he proposed to levy a tax on a tax. He was very sorry to inform the right hon. Gentleman that he could not do this, and he would tell him why. The reason arose out of the dates fixed for the rendering of the accounts. Under the Bill the Estate Duty was to be paid and the accounts were to be delivered in six months after the death; but the Succession Duty account had to be delivered and the account paid only 12 months after the death, and the Succession Duty was payable only on the amount that came into actual possession, so that they could not get the duty on that £6,000 which never did come into possession. Now another point. The rendering of the accounts of an estate as prescribed in the measure was absolutely impossible. The executor was required to render an account of the whole estate, but there was a great part of which he probably knew nothing—debts to and from the estate—and liabilities of which he had no cognizance. The accounts could never be closed, because the property of which the Bill took account included property which might fall into the estate at any future time whatever without any limit. It was not uncommon in this country for persons to settle property on actresses and in America upon type-writers, and not to tell their executors of these settlements. How was it possible for an executor to give information about things of which he knew nothing? The House must observe that when the account was delivered it was by no means an end of the matter, because by Clause 7 the executor was bound to account for "all the property," and this by the Definition Clause included all

"property passing either immediately on the death or after any interval either certainly or contingently,"

and not alone on the death, but
"with reference to the death."

Till every farthing was finally brought in the property could not be aggregated nor the varying graduated duty be charged, so that the account would be open to all eternity. This was not an imaginary case. The books of the Legacy and Succession Duty Department were open since 1796, and many could not yet be closed, and no books could ever be closed if this system were adopted. By the time the historic New Zealander came to contemplate the ruins of London he would find the remaining inhabitants liable for untold accounts and untold millions of arrears of Estate Duty. And it was not merely the executor who had got to render an account of the estate, but "any person whom the Commissioners might believe" to have had dealings with the property was bound to bring in an account and verify it on oath. Such a person would be forced to give information about something he did not know of, and to verify it by an oath which must necessarily be false. This was not a tessellated legislation, but Colney Hatch legislation. He knew there were provisions that the Commissioners might give a certificate at the end of two years if they were satisfied that the duties with regard to a particular property had been discharged, but they would require ample proof, which could not and would not be forthcoming; and even then the certificate would only cover that person and that property. In fact, the certificate never could be given. But, suppose his argument was wrong, and a certificate of discharge could be given, had the Chancellor of the Exchequer ever reflected what an enormous number of certificates would be required? In England alone there were 1,000 deaths a week of persons upon whose decease property passed, including stocks and shares, for every one of which a separate certificate would have to be delivered. It was a moderate estimate to say that on an average on each death there were at least ten stocks or shares or sums under policies or moneys at a bank passing, so that the unfortunate Legacy Duty Department would have to issue 10,000 certificates a week, each certificate requiring many inquiries to be made and work to be done. It would take 1,000 or probably 2,000 clerks to perform this work, and the New Zealander was very likely to find London buried under the piles of certificates that would have to be made. The effect of all this would be to increase the opportunities and to give greater facilities to those persons who wished to avoid the payment of the tax. Another consequence that would follow if ever these Death Duties were imposed would be that men of large fortunes would send the greater part of their capital abroad, mostly, no doubt, to the United States, where investments were readily obtained and where Death Duties did not exist. The result of this would be severely felt in England, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would, when too late, find to his cost that he had frightened away the goose that laid the golden eggs, which now so largely assisted to fill his larder. In future every prudent man would invest his money abroad, and direct that even his English legacies should be paid out of his foreign property by the foreign executor, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer could touch neither, and, so far from getting extra duties, would lose much of those he now got. Therefore, it would be seen how much this Bill increased the facilities for evasion. He believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer fully realised that fact, for he had only reckoned on getting £2,000,000 from personalty and £1,250,000 from realty. These were the proofs by which he trusted that he had established his proposition that, in spite of the severe and unjust demand that was to be made upon one class of the community, the net gain to the Revenue from the Death Duties, after all charges and falsifications and the enormous extra expense of collection had been allowed for, would be small and slight indeed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had dreamt a dream of a Democratic Budget, and no doubt in his dream the sinister figures of Debt, Drink, Death, and Income Tax had combined to form an image like unto the one that Nebuchadnezzar beheld—an image which of gold and silver, of iron, of brass, and of clay. To other hon. Members he would leave the duty of showing the gold and silver that could be wrung from drink, the iron of the Income Tax, and the brass that was so apparent in the dealings with the Debt. His task was to stamp on the clay feet of the Death Duties, and to show that they, at least, could never support the image which Nebuchadnezzar, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had set up. The worst of this Budget was its dishonesty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone about, not to levy a tax, but to oppress a class. The whole of the Budget was marked by a pitiless animosity to all those who held property. The right hon. Gentleman had gone out of his way to hunt down the unfortunate landed proprietor. He deeply regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not considered it worth while to remain in his seat and listen to the practical remarks that he had addressed to the House that evening. No doubt, however, he preferred pluming himself outside on the results of the "popular Budget" he had brought forward, and on the dire wounds he was dealing to his enemy, property. But the end was not yet. Property was not incapable of resistance. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer remember that—

"The man that once did sell the lion's skin
While the beast lived, was killed with hunting him."

This so-called "popular" Budget might at first sight delude the ignorant and the unreflecting, but when it was considered it would be found to be unsound in principle, immoral, unjust, inexpedient, and wholly impracticable.

SIR ISAAC HOLDEN (York, W.R., Keighley) said, that during the 12 years he had been in the House he had seldom spoke on any subject, being but a plain man of business, but that he could not refrain from expressing his very cordial approbation of the thoroughly democratic Budget which had been brought forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whether that right hon. Gentleman was alone responsible for its details or whether other Members of the Cabinet had assisted him he could not say, but in his opinion the Finance Bill for his year was based upon the broadest principles of justice to the people. Whatever might be said against the Death Duties as unjustly oppressing the landed classes, it must be remembered that that class was limited, and that in no country in the world was the soil held in the hands of so few persons as in England. If the new taxation had the effect of breaking up large estates it would be one step, at any rate, in a direction of change and reform, which all who had the well-being of the masses at heart would do their best to support. He fully agreed with the views that had been expressed that the strength of our Navy must be kept up to a standard of efficiency, and, if necessary, it must be maintained at a strength equal to the combined strength of the Navies of any two foreign Powers. The poor were already taxed much beyond the rich. England was, no doubt, the wealthiest country in the world, and the poor paid beyond their share of the general taxation. [Sir W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear!] Well, if they could not put any more on the poor they must go to the rich, and see what they could get out of them. Great wealth was made in various great industries, like wool-combing, of which he had some knowledge; but those who engaged in these industries, and who realised wealth, could do nothing without the protection which they obtained from the Government. They ought not to—and he did not—complain of the graduated duty. If they did not maintain a powerful Navy their commerce, which extended all over the world, would be impracticable, and it was only through the protection of their Navy that their commercial men dare risk their lives and their fortunes in order to extend England's commerce, and without that extension of their commerce they could never employ their population. He thought the landed proprietors should not begrudge to do that which the democracy had done; and he ventured to tell the Party opposite that the people were not ignorant of what went on in that House. He had a good deal to do with a working population, and it was surprising the attention they gave to that House. Let hon. Gentlemen opposite, therefore, not delude themselves into the idea that obstructive opposition to this Budget would escape notice. He hoped they would accept the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer — well arranged and matured proposals—and that there would be a large majority for a system which must be accepted and would be approved by the great majority of the people.

*MR. SAUNDERS (Newington, Walworth) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean made a valuable contribution to this Debate when he pointed out that the landed interest and agricultural interest were not identical, but separate. The taxation of land was not only not the taxation of agriculture, but frequently meant the freedom of agriculture and the freedom of industry. That had been shown in a practical light by what had happened in New Zealand. Five years ago that colony was the most depressed of all our colonies. Now it was the most prosperous; and why? Five years ago the land of the colony was inaccessible, because it was held by large speculators and could not be obtained at a reasonable price. Recently taxation varying from 5 to 15 per cent. on the interest of the capital value had been imposed. As a result, the price of land had fallen 33 per cent., and instead of the working classes leaving the colony as they did five years ago to the extent of 20,000 in one year they were now returning thither, and the colony was in a most flourishing condition, because of the adoption of a just principle in the taxation of land. Until we had that principle applied in this country he feared that we should continue to suffer from depression of trade. The taxation of land in this country was conspicuous by its absence. He wished that some of the hon. Members who had complained of the taxation of land had pointed out some instances in which that taxation bore heavily and unjustly. Many instances to the contrary could certainly be pointed to. He should like to invite the attention of the House for a moment to the condition of the working people of London. Take the case of a man who occupied one room in which the whole of his family were compelled to live, and paying for that room 4s. per week. That 4s. a week meant 1s. to the builder, 2s. to the ground landlord, and 1s. to the rate collector. That man paid 50s. per annum in rates. But what did the landowner pay? His contribution to the taxation of the country in that case was simply the amount of the Income Tax, and what he actually paid was 2s. 11d., as compared with the 50s. of the working man. Take another instance of the taxation of land—the case of an estate in the parish in which he lived, and which was only recently occupied by a millionaire. His land amounted to 40 acres, which was not a greater proportion than one acre would be to a business or professional man. Upon that 40 acres the rates payable according to the ratebook amounted to £4 per acre. Two years ago the land was sold to an Artisans' Dwelling Company, and buildings were to be erected for artisans and labourers. What did the House suppose would now be the taxation of that land? It would be at the rate of £80 per acre in addition to the value of the buildings put upon it, whatever they might be. It was quite obvious, therefore, that building operations were paralysed by excessive taxation. All this kind of taxation fell upon the masses and not upon the classes. Possibly there were Members in the House who remembered the declarations made by the late Prime Minister in 1886, when he knew that he was about to be defeated. He said—

> "I have made concessions to the classes and concessions to powerful interests—concessions which have not been accepted in the same spirit in which they have been offered, and which will not be repeated. Henceforth I shall consider the interests, not of the classes but of the masses."

How had that pledge been kept? It was followed by the Newcastle Programme—and a grand programme that was, promising to the working classes of the country the taxation of ground values, the payment of Members, and the payment of registration expenses. Where did they find a vestige of these promises in the present Budget, and why did they not find it? Because this Budget, like the legislation generally which emanated from the classes, was made in the interests of the classes. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a very clear statement as to what the effect of the Budget was—so clear and brief that he (Mr. Saunders) would venture to submit it to the House. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Under the plan of the Government the increase of the Death Duties on personalty will be £2,130,000 and upon realty £1,320,000. But on the total of £1,320,000 put upon realty we have given compensation under Schedule (A) of the Income Tax amounting to £600,000 applicable to realty. That will leave the net additional charge upon realty £700,000, of which sum £350,000 or £400,000 is asked from the landed interests of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland as their contribution to the defence of the country, to place their taxation upon an equality with that of other classes and interests."

Never was a proposal made to the House to accomplish by such small means such great results. And it would not do it. £350,000 or £400,000 was by no means an adequate contribution from the landed interest in the country to meet a deficit in the revenue occasioned by the increase in expenditure. What, then, became of the equalisation of Death Duties? The equalisation of Death Duties was a matter which had been urged by leading financiers for 100 years. In 1853 the right hon. Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone) spoke of equalisation of the Death Duties, and urged that it should be effected, and he referred to what William Pitt had said 60 years before that. For 100 years the landed interest of this country had enjoyed exemption from Death Duties which were paid by other property, and now when the matter came to be taken in hand, how was it dealt with? Instead of considering how much landlords had saved by the extension there was an attempt made to palliate the small burden which the equalisation of the duty would put upon land. The Income Tax was brought in to compensate for simply doing justice to the community in the matter of the equalisation of Death Duties, and in attempting that equalisation the Chancellor of the Exchequer had introduced a greater wrong than that which he proposed to remedy. For what was the state of affairs with regard to Income Tax? It had always been a matter of contention that persons enjoying fixed incomes from real property should pay a larger percentage than people were called upon to pay for a precarious income. In 1842 Mr. Disraeli, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed that incomes from real property should be rated at 7d. in the £1, and that incomes of a precarious nature should be rated at 5¼d. His successor did not adopt that proposal. And why? Because he said that—

> "Incomes from realty were taxed on their gross value; they should equitably be taxed on their net value, which would make a difference of 16 per cent."

The present Chancellor of the Exchequer did what neither of his great predecessors would have dreamed of doing. He not only charged the same on realty and precarious incomes, but he placed the charge on fixed incomes at a net amount instead of at a gross amount as it formerly was, and he allowed a difference of from 8½ to 17 per cent. Now, that was introducing an inequality which might be of a more serious character than the inequality which was adjusted. Graduated taxation! They were to have graduated taxation, and he (Mr. Saunders) was very glad of it. Graduated taxation was a very important matter; but how was that dealt with in this measure? Here, again, they kept the word of promise to the ear and broke it to the hope. Graduated taxation meant the taxation of large properties at a higher rate than small ones. What was done in the Bill? There was no application of taxation as long as the old fogey who was incapable of applying his money kept it in his own hands. They waited till it ceased to be a large property—until it was divided and would possibly be used more advantageously—and then they came upon it with graduated taxation. It was not graduated in his (Mr. Saunders's) opinion, except that it graduated the wrong way. What was wanted was to catch the capitalist while he was living. Under present conditions he could hold his gold to the very edge of the churchyard mould, and his property was protected, not taxed. Then, as to registration. The course the Government were taking was disappointing. It was expected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have made the burden a national one, rendering the access of a poor man to Parliament more easy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is dealing with another Bill before the House.

*Mr. SAUNDERS said, he would pass on. He ventured to think that the Government would never have been placed in power but for the pledges they had given on these matters. Had they not promised the taxation of ground values, the payment of Members, and the lessening of the cost of registration they would never have had an opportunity of sitting on the Treasury Bench. It was a very serious matter that a Government which got into Office on the strength of promises of this kind should have failed to fulfil those promises. It was said that this would be an epoch-making Budget. He believed it would be an epoch-making Budget, but in a very different sense to what had been represented. What would happen was that the working classes, disappointed of that relief which they expected from the Budget, would cease to have confidence in the statesmanship of their rulers. He had watched politics ever since the introduction of the Reform Bill of 1832, and never had he seen such a dereliction from promises as that which was now being witnessed. It was easy for some to regard with equanimity the existing condition of things, but unjust legislation meant to a great number of the people intense and undeserved suffering. How could hon. Members expect men amongst whom the schoolmaster had been, men who had become intelligent and enlightened, to still remain suffering through injustice with the quietude they had manifested in the past? For eight years they had looked to this Budget to release them from the suffering and injustice they now endured, and they had been entirely and completely disappointed. There was no assistance for the working man in the Budget. There was some relief for a class a good deal above the working man, but no relief for the working man. The poor man who paid 4s. a week for a room for his family would still go on paying 2s. a week to the ground landlord, and 1s. a week to the rate collector, and the ground landlord would still contribute 2s. 11d. a year in taxation, while the working man contributed 50s. How long were the people of this country going to be satisfied with this state of things? He looked forward to the future with very considerable apprehension. There had been great difficulty in repressing the disposition to action other than political, both in the neighbouring country and in our own. What could they say to those men? How could they ask them to be content to starve in quietude, without making any effort on their own behalf? He had talked to them during the last eight years with some effect. What could he say in future? He hoped he would learn something from the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to what could be said to them. This Budget did not give them a vestige of hope, and he believed that the absence of hope might bring about very serious consequences in this country.

Mr. BOUSFIELD (Hackney, N.) said, he would not apologise for inflicting himself upon the House in this matter, because there was very little House to apologise to at the present moment, still he was glad to see there were some hon. Gentlemen behind him who were interested in the subject. He only desired to make a very few observations, and he could as well hang them upon an observation that fell from an hon. Member opposite, who spoke from behind the Ministerial Bench, as upon anything else. The hon. Member stated it was his view that those of them who, on that side of the House, voted against the Second Reading of the Budget Bill, were necessarily setting themselves against any and every proposition contained or involved in this Bill. He humbly begged to differ from that position. It was perfectly possible, and in his own case it was the fact, that one might approve of perhaps even the majority of the principles that had been enunciated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in putting forth his proposals, and yet one might differ from him in the proposals to carrying out those principles embodied in this Bill. That he was assuming, and he believed it was the position, he would not say of a considerable majority, but of a large number of those who sat on that side of the House, and who were going to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill. When he first heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, it appeared to him almost a Budget that might have been introduced by a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman expounded in roseate colours principles that had received a good deal of approval; he expounded them in such roseate colours that he (Mr. Bousfield) felt one must give a certain measure of approval to those proposals; but then they found, when they were put in the form of a Bill, and the various proposals were bracketted one against another, that after all this Bill was likely to do more harm than good. Of course, he maintained that if in carrying out proposals that were admittedly good they introduced difficulties, they introduced hardships, they introduced inconveniences and inequalities between one class and another, they threw discredit upon those proposals and prevented the adoption of them. He desired to make two observations, and first of all with reference to the general principles of taxation. Probably they might be regarded as a truism, but the House would forgive him if he thought it necessary to make the observation in order to make his meaning clear. He took it everyone would admit the main fund from which the taxation of the country should be drawn was the fund consisting of what might be called surplus income, and by that he meant the income a man had when he had paid for all necessaries of life, including among them the rent of his house, the maintenance of himself and his family, making provision of some sort or other for sickness, old age, and death, and the support of his widow, it might be, after his death. When he had paid out of his income all these absolutely necessary expenses, if he had any surplus income left that he might spend on luxuries and upon civilising agencies, then they had a fund that might be called surplus income out of which taxation should come. In the case of a working man with £100 a year the surplus income would be very small, amounting to, say, £5 a year; in the case of a man with £500 a year it might be from £50 to £100; but in all cases the fund they ought to regard as a man's taxable capacity was the surplus income he had left after providing for all the absolutely necessary expenses of life and of civilisation. Let him apply that to the provisions in this Bill. First of all, there was the proposition of an extra 6d. upon beer and upon spirits. There could be no doubt that in that proposition they were getting at surplus income, because whenever a man bought beer or spirits—he should be very sorry to admit they were necessaries of life—whenever a man had money he could expend in the purchase of beer or spirits he was spending part of his surplus income. They were putting an additional tax upon that, and they were therefore getting at the surplus fund, because they were taxing that which was a luxury, or the money that was available for luxuries. So far so good, and one might find a precedent of a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer in the same straits resorting to a similar expedient for raising taxation. But due balance ought to be observed in this matter. It had been already pointed out how this affected Ireland, and specially affected spirit as opposed to beer drinkers. It had been pointed out, moreover, that the incidence of additional taxation of this kind was very partial, because it only touched a certain class of the population, and left another class wholly untouched by it, and not called upon to contribute to emergencies arising. In a case of this kind it was unfortunate that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have put an extra tax upon what was, in the main, the poor man's drink, and, as the rich man drank wine, that the right hon. Gentleman had not accompanied that additional tax by an additional tax upon wines of different kinds. It might be said that some wines were taxed up to the highest amount they would stand, but that could not be said in the case of light wines, and one found a difficulty in understanding the reason which could have induced the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put the additional taxation he hoped to draw from this source upon the drinks chiefly consumed by the poor man, whilst he left alone the corresponding drinks consumed by the rich man. He did not think that Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer had done anything like this. What the late Chancellor of the Exchequer did was to put a tax upon wines without putting a tax upon beer or spirits, so that he was obviously putting the tax upon the people who could afford to pay it. But the very reverse was taking place now, and to pick out beer and spirits and leave alone wines was a very invidious thing to do. In order to make things fair all round, the three classes of liquors should have been treated alike. Coming to the question of the equalisation of realty and personalty as regarded Death Duties, he held that in principle the Government were doing a thing altogether good. Nobody could deny that taxation of accumulations where they could get hold of them was a right and just thing. It was a just and convenient form of taxation when they found accumulations on the death of an owner that they should be taxed and a certain proportion transferred to the State. Then, again, the condition that no change from personalty to realty or from realty to personalty should alter the amount of taxation that should be paid was a principle which *per se* nobody would attack. Upon the principle of the equalisation of Death Duties he was altogether at one with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but how had the proposal been applied in practice? He thought that by giving a simple illustration one could show better than by wider argument what was the effect of the actual proposals put forward. Let him take the case of a yeoman farmer and a butcher living in the same village, who were making the same income of about £300 a year and each having a surplus income every year to the amount of £100. There could be no doubt that the taxable capacity of these two individuals was precisely the same. It was true that one man had so many acres of land and the other had only a house and shop in the village, but each, by the expenditure of all his energy, was able at the end of the year to show the same amount, practically, of income, and the same amount of money which he might save, if thrifty, or which he might expend in luxuries. Say that the butcher died and that his son succeeded to his estate under the new *régime* which was to be inaugurated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that the yeoman farmer died and his son succeeded to his estate under the same *régime*. To work out the analogy one might fairly assume, in the case of the butcher, that his estate might be valued at something like £400, and in the case of the yeoman farmer at £4,000. These figures, roughly taken, represented very fairly cases which would happen in actual practice of two people in the same position making the same income, and altogether, as regarded taxable capacity, on the same footing. The butcher's son under this scheme had to pay a sum of £4 on that estate, but the yeoman farmer's son had to pay £120. That was to say, that although the taxable capacity was precisely the same in both cases, the one had to pay thirty times more than the other under the system inaugurated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He ventured to think an illustration of that sort showed there was a screw loose somewhere. Of course, it might be said that in one case they were dealing with a man who had a property, and in the other were dealing with a man whose property was very small. That argument was perfectly right so long as they were dealing with big properties. It was all very well for the hon. Baronet who spoke just before the adjournment, and who was credited with having some millions to dispose of—he hoped his estate might long escape the clutches of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—to say he was perfectly willing to submit his estate to this process. It did not matter to that hon. Baronet if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to take £1,000,000, or £2,000,000, or perhaps £3,000,000; it would still leave him a very rich man as rich men went even in that House; therefore, socially it might be said they were not doing much harm so long as they were treating big estates in this way. But where was this process to go? A yeoman might have descendants to this big estate, and this process might go on until it was gradually whittled down to an estate which was practically the smallest on which a yeoman farmer could make a living. His land was turned to husbandry; but they were taxing it as one which might be put into the market and sold, whereas really in fairness, comparing the taxable capacity of the yeoman farmer and butcher, in both cases they ought to treat the affair as a going concern, and not on the basis of selling them up. They were taxing one man on a scale 120 times greater than the other. They were doing a monstrous injustice; and in putting forward a scheme which perpetrated such an injustice the Government were doing a disservice to the principle which they professed to believe in, and in which he (Mr. Bousfield) did believe in—namely, the principle of really equalising the Death Duties in the case of real and personal property. Possibly, it might be pointed out that in the case of the butcher he had a precarious income, while the yeoman farmer had not. He did not think that was at all the case. If both men were incapacitated by illness the business of the farmer was quite as likely to go to pieces as that of the butcher; in fact, more likely, for the wife of the butcher might carry on her husband's business. That brought him to another point, in which he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a grievous mistake. No doubt such an argument did enter into the right hon. Gentleman's consideration of the difference if he looked at the fact that in one case there was more precariousness than in another. But why, when he came to the next part of his Budget—the Income Tax proposals—had he not recognised the same principle, that the precarious income should be charged at a different rate from the fixed income? Why had he not recognised that principle, which had for years past been widely recognised as being practically a difference of the greatest importance? This was a matter to which he had always attached the greatest importance. He had urged it frequently to his constituents; he had been pledged to it for a long time, and he took this opportunity of giving expression to the disappointment felt that in this small attempt at graduating the Income Tax no account whatever had been taken of the precarious income. Suppose there were two incomes of £500 a year, one derived from Consols and the other the income of a professional man—a precarious income as opposed to one derived from a fixed investment. In the case of the precarious income, what the man had to do was this. Any thrifty man, out of the surplus of his income, should make provision for sickness and old age, for the education and starting in life of his children, and for the support of his widow after his death. How much would it take out of an income of £500 a year to provide for these contingencies? Suppose both men lived on the same scale as regarded what was necessary. The man who lived on that scale from his income derived from Consols had not to make provision for these contingencies, and he would have a surplus of £100 a year to spend in luxuries; but the other man, having to make provision for such contingencies, would really have no surplus at all. The taxable capacity of the two was altogether different, and he protested against any increase of the Income Tax, accompanied with a graduation which professed to give certain advantages to the small incomes, but which altogether overlooked and neglected the difference which existed between precarious and fixed incomes. As regarded the principle of graduation, he was himself in agreement with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he had no fault to find with the principle of graduation. They had heard the argument against it, that they could not tell where to stop, and that there was no definite halting place and stage in the principle involved as to when they must stop. But that was an argument they heard every day, and what they had to do in every case where Nature did not put down landmarks for them was to consider and regard what was fair. That argument was not an admissible argument. If the principle of graduation was a good principle, he took it that it was no argument against it that one could not see, for the moment, how far it might be well to take it, and they could only find this out from experience, which would, after all, tell them how far they might carry out the principle. He rather objected that this principle had been so badly treated, and that the very legitimate application of the principle, and that most called for, had been wholly neglected by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It might be said that in approving of some of the principles put forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in disapproving of actual proposals he had made, the proper course for him to have taken would have been to have voted in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill and tried in Committee to have introduced Amendments. In theory that looked very plausible, but in practice how would it work? First of all, the Budget must be taken as a whole; it must be taken to hang together as a whole, and they could not disturb one part without disturbing and overthrowing the whole scheme. Therefore, the alteration which would meet the different views he had put forward, although in theory permissible in Committee, in practice was not permissible, because it would destroy the balance of the Budget. The second and more important reason for taking the course he was taking was that not only had they no security that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Committee would receive any Amendments which would deal with the inequalities and hardships that had been pointed out in the proposals, but they knew perfectly well that the right hon. Gentleman would resist them in Committee, that they could not carry any such Amendments, and that if this Bill were read a second time it would pass through Committee and through this House in practically the form in which it now stood with all its imperfections on its head, and that being so his only course was to vote against the Second Reading.

*MR. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) said, it was gratifying to know that the Government had had the courage to adjust the burden of taxation so that it should rest on the shoulders best able to bear it, and also to find that those who had clamoured most for the increase in National Expenditure would have the privilege of paying very largely for it. It was, further, most satisfactory that a traffic which caused so much waste of money to the country should be laid under additional burdens for the National Expenditure. But he regretted the absence of one proposal from the Bill. There had always been amongst the advanced legislators of the country a desire to withdraw and abolish any grants of public money in the shape of bounties or other protection allowances, and it might not be generally known that spirits was the only article exported from our shores on which a bounty was allowed. That allowance was at the rate of 2d. a gallon on plain spirits and 4d. a gallon on compounded spirits, and amounted in 1892 to £38,000, and in 1893 to £26,000. He was informed by the Secretary to the Treasury, in answer to a question on the subject, that these allowances were made as compensation for the increased cost of production owing to Excise restrictions. But he was told upon the authority of one of the most able and intelligent of the Surveyors of Customs that there was no such extra expense. In fact, the contrary was the fact, for while the brewers of beer and the blenders of tea had to pay the cost of the attendance of officers of Excise, in the case of distillers the cost was borne by the country. He would take another case. Alkali was manufactured under Government regulation. The manufacturer had to pay for a licence to cover part of the cost of the inspection which the Government exercised over his works. He had also to provide very costly plant to comply with the stipulations of the Alkali Works Regulation Act. Yet no bounty was made to him on his exported manufactures, and although the producers of similar foreign goods had to incur no such expense, he had to meet foreign competition with the burden of these restrictions upon him. The exported spirits, upon which the bounties were paid, in many cases did not amount in value to more than 1s. 4d. per gallon, so that the allowance was equal to something like 12½ per cent., which was practically a profit to the exporting distiller, and whether he shipped them to Africa to ruin the aborigines there, or nearer home—to the Isle of Man—the same profit was assured to him. The amount, it was true, was not large, but the principle involved in the discontinuance of these bounties ought to be a sufficient inducement to the Government to take the matter up. He therefore hoped that in Committee it would be favourably considered, and a clause for the abolition of these allowances introduced, in order that this sum of £30,000 could go into the Exchequer.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerset, Wellington) said, the success of the financial proposals of the Government rested, mainly, on two contingencies—the continual ownership of land by individuals and the consumption of alcohol. He would not deal with the inconsistency of a Government that placed a good part of the money they desired to raise on the trade which they were striving to injure by their Local Veto Bill. But with regard to the first point, he took it that the object of the Government was to extend the ownership of land, as far as possible, to Co-operative Bodies. That was the object of the Parish Councils Act, and undoubtedly a great number of hon. Members opposite desired to see a large transfer of land from individual ownership to corporate ownership. What would be the result of that policy? Parish Councils, being Corporate Bodies, would pay no Death Duties on realty. Corporate Bodies paid 5 per cent. on their incomes from property; but the income of the Parish Councils from realty would be nothing, because it was intended that the rent charged for land let out in allotments by the Parish Councils should simply cover expenses, and bring no profit to the ratepayers. All land that passed from individual ownership to the ownership of Parish Councils would be unavailable for Imperial taxation. Therefore, the financial proposals of the Government with regard to land would be a failure to the extent that their Parish Councils Act was a success. He would not go into the vexed question as to whether the increased duties on beer and spirits would fall on the consumer or on the producer. But he was sure that if the increased Beer and Spirit Duties led to a larger use of rice and sugar in the place of barley in the production of whisky and beer, the first result would be very considerable injury to the barley grower, and, whether injury were done to the pocket of the producer or the consumer or not, it was certain that very considerable injury would be done to the inside of the consumer. The proposed equalisation of the Death Duties would inflict great injury upon rural districts, because agricultural land was wholly unable to bear any increased taxation, and, besides, they had no reliable figures given them as to what that increase would be. On the night the Budget was introduced it was said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be £550,000; but the Under Secretary to the Colonies the other night put it at £500,000. It was said that the increased Death Duties were required for the needs of the Navy. If that were so, those who lived by the land would willingly bear their fair share of the taxation. But he would point out that the principal reason why the increase in the strength of the Navy was demanded was for the protection of our largely increasing importation of foreign food supplies. It was owing to those foreign food supplies that agriculture at home had become unprofitable; and yet agriculture was actually called upon to pay the larger share of the cost of protecting that foreign competition which had ruined it. What would be the position in the future of a man who succeeded to agricultural land? He first would have to convey a portion of his property, then he would have to mortgage—the one thing landowners had tried to avoid, and had made great sacrifices to get rid of—and then he would have to dispute with the authorities of Somerset House. The position of the man of old who went from Jerusalem to Jericho would be most comfortable compared with the man who succeeded to agricultural land in future. Of the former, it was recorded that he fell among thieves, but the latter would fall first into the hands of a valuer, then into the hands of a money-lender, afterwards into the hands of the authorities of Somerset House, and finally into the hands of a lawyer, and he could not imagine a worse position than that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to give the House some idea as to how the proposed valuation was to be carried out. It was easy enough to value personalty in the shape of Stocks and shares, pictures and plate; but it was much more difficult and much more expensive to value land. What would be the result? So far from equalising the taxation on realty and personalty, the Government were putting an extra burden on realty in the shape of the cost of an expensive valuation. Therefore, there would be no equalisation of realty and personalty. He would like to have an explanation as to the valuation of timber. At the present time, if a man cut down a tree, he had to pay the Death Duties; but under the new arrangement an oak tree which lasted 400 years might be valued 15 or 20 times. The result would be that every man who came into property would cut down his timber, and no man would employ labour in his woods and plantations. It was difficult enough now to improve a farm—to put up buildings and cottages—but the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to make it impossible. The Bill would also drive land into fewer hands. The object of the Party opposite, with which many on the Opposition side sympathised, was to distribute the land amongst a larger number of persons; but this Budget would make the possession of land more of a luxury for the few by making it impossible for anyone to hold land but a very rich man. The Bill would also place a premium upon bad management. Take the case of two neighbours. One spent £60,000 on improving his estate. When he died the surveyor would come round, see everything in good condition, and up would go the valuation. The other neighbour did not spend a shilling on his estate, but invested the £60,000 in other ways. The Inspector in that case would see everything going to wreck and ruin, and the heir would pay less. It might be said that the heir in the latter case would have to pay Succession Duty on the £60,000 invested. Yes; but he got a return from it, and his father had got a return from it. What return would the man get who invested his £60,000 in improving his property? Not a single shilling of return, but perhaps a reduced rental, and certainly an increase of duty on an enhanced valuation. The thousand pounds yeoman had been mentioned in the course of the Debate. He did not know much about him; but if he existed, he existed in Ireland as a purchaser under the Land Purchase Act, in England as a purchaser under the Land Holdings Act, and in Scotland as a crofter. In any of those cases the man must have a charge on his land for the purchase money; and under the Death Duties he would have a further charge on his property—a second mortgage—so that, so far from benefitting him, the new proposals of the Government would tax him out of existence altogether. There was another class of yeoman with which he was more familiar—farmers with 150 acres, valued at £4,000, and with incomes of £150 a year. The successor of one of those men would have to pay £120 duty, and probably from 10 to 30 guineas for the valuation. It might be said that the man could sell part of his land. But if he did so it was obvious that a few successions would reduce the land to the vanishing point. It might be said he could mortgage. It was that which had ruined our yeomen off the face of the earth. Therefore, the effect of the Bill would be the ruin of the very class which hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House maintained they were anxious to see flourishing, and whose loss to the country both sides would equally deplore. So, really, if the Death Duties were levied on the principle proposed, the class of yeoman farmers, farming 150 acres of their own, would cease to exist. One of them said to him the other day, "The Chancellor of the Exchequer has got my shirt, and now he wants my skin." The Chancellor of the Exchequer complained that owners of property were not sufficiently grateful to him; and one reason which the right hon. Gentleman advanced why he was entitled to that gratitude was that all property at its owner's death belonged to the State, and that it was very kind of the State to allow an owner's successor to have anything at all. He would point out that that was not only true of the property of a dead man, but of the property in possession of a man during his life. If it were not for the protection of the law no man, not even a Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have any security whatever in his property, except what he was strong enough to hold in his hand, or massive enough to sit upon. It was also said the landowners should be grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction in the Income Tax. He did not see why they should be thankful. The reduction was not anything like sufficient. Ten per cent. was not anything like the working expenses of an estate. The working expenses of an estate, including rates, taxes, buildings, subscriptions to schools—for they formed part of the expenses of an estate, and if they were not paid they would have to be paid in the form of rates—all those outgoings came to three-fifths of the income. He believed that the new Death Duties would swallow up two years of the gross income of an estate, and swallow up six years of the net income. What could the owner do in the circumstances? The Chancellor of the Exchequer invited him to mortgage; but that was very difficult in those days. It was said the owner could sell. But who would buy? In any case he would be under the disadvantage of having to sell in a hurry, and surely no one wanted the experiences of the Encumbered Estates Act in Ireland to be repeated in England. That would be the result in most cases. In other cases the owner would have to stop buildings, stop improvements, discharge his servants, and live as close as he could. That would hurt the farmer and small tradesman, but the man it would injure most of all would be the agricultural labourer. He did not believe that hon. Gentlemen opposite had any idea of the number of labourers that were employed on most estates throughout England. Those men would be driven from the country into the towns. The results of the proposed duties would be that there would be less labour employed in the country, building and other improvements would be less, tradesmen would have less custom, and the labourers would have a desperate struggle to get work. It was because he believed that 19-20ths of his constituents would be injured by the Bill that he intended to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Thirsk.

*MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire) said, he had to ask the House for the indulgence which it always extended to a Member who addressed it for the first time. He belonged to the class who derived nearly all their income from the land; and if he thought the prophecies of a sinister character with regard to the results of the proposed new duties which the hon. Member who had just sat down indulged in were likely to come true, he certainly would not vote, as he intended to do, most heartily for the Budget. Hon. Gentlemen who made such gloomy forecasts must be entirely oblivious of the different methods in which labour was employed on agricultural property. In the first place, the owner was bound to keep buildings in proper repair, to attend to fencing, and other works of a similar kind. The view taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite was that, in order to pay the additional Succession Duty on land, the owner would at once cut down all those items of necessary expenditure. He could not conceive any greater libel either upon the solvency or upon the good sense of country gentlemen. Of two things one. Either the successor had sufficient income, after paying Succession Duty, to carry on repairs and improvements; and in that case if he were so regardless of his duty to himself, to his successors, and to his country, as to neglect those repairs and improvements, the sooner he quitted possession the better. On the other hand, if the successor were so utterly insolvent as to be unable, after paying Succession Duty, to defray the necessary outgoings of the estate, equally the sooner he left the better. He thought that was a sufficient answer to the gloomy prophecies indulged in by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Turning to the general principles of the Budget, he wished to give his hearty support to the principle of graduation, and he did so, as a landowner, for this reason: that he was opposed to a system which aggregated the largest part of the land of the country in a very few hands, unless that aggregation of property was unaccompanied by any undue privileges or undue exemptions. It was said that the exemptions which land at present enjoyed from Succession Duty was compensated for by land paying heavily in local taxation. He was not going to say that that might not be the case; but he would say it seemed to him unwise that landowners, unpopular as they were in the country, should not take this opportunity of getting rid of exemptions which their fellow-citizens did not enjoy. Let them get rid of those exemptions, and then they would be able to discuss without any prejudice against them the question of whether or not they were unjustly rated. With regard to the alarm expressed on the other side of the House on the subject of the valuation of land, he had to say that he had some experience of dealing with the officers of Inland Revenue, both with regard to personalty and with regard to realty, and the process had neither been costly nor difficult; and certainly the authorities of Somerset House had been most reasonable, and had taken a liberal view of the value of the property they had to deal with. Why should the authorities of those great Government Departments suddenly abandon the principles by which they had hitherto been controlled, and impose upon successors litigation and the other inconveniences referred to by hon. Gentlemen opposite? Having thus expressed his reasons for supporting the Budget as a whole, he should like to make an appeal on one or two points to his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The first was with regard to the Income Tax. He was bound to say that the allowance of 10 per cent. did not represent the annual charge necessary for outgoings on an average property. The Assessment Committee of the County Council of the county of which he was a Member held a conference, not very long ago, with the Assessment Committees of the county for the purpose of arriving at a basis of reduction in the county, and the result was that they unanimously agreed that the reduction should be 15 per cent. In his own experience, he found that the cost of repairs in wages, material, &c., alone for the past three years was 18½ per cent., and for the five years previous it was 15·4 per cent. It would be more equitable to give the landlord the option of paying under Schedule (D) instead of under Schedule (A); or the abatement should be increased. The relief that was given in Income Tax was a most material boon to the tenant-farmers. He believed that in his own county it would release almost every tenant-farmer in the county from paying Income Tax; because unless he paid a rent of £320 a year he would under the Budget be entirely free; and even if he paid up to £1,000 a year he would have material relief. For those reasons, therefore, both as a landowner and as Representative of one of the largest purely agricultural constituencies, he was thankful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the Budget, and would vote heartily for it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The Prime Minister, on a recent occasion speaking in the country, said of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's present position that by the Budget he had at one stride placed himself in the foremost rank of financial authorities. I do not know whether that was merely a *politesse* between colleagues. If so, I have no criticism to make upon it. I should be the last person to desire to prevent the oiling of the administrative wheels by any such methods as these which the Prime Minister has adopted; but if we are to take it as a serious judgment by a serious Minister upon the financial proposals of one of his colleagues, it certainly gives us some cause for reflection. If there be one thing more certain than another it is that the present Budget, be it good or be it bad, is at all events a Budget wholly inconsistent with the traditions of Liberal finance; and if the present Chancellor of the Exchequer has risen to heights but rarely reached by any of his predecessors, it is because he has lifted himself upon the ruins of all the principles which his predecessors made it their boast to carry out. The right hon. Gentleman has borrowed from many quarters. He has borrowed, I will not say the actual policy of any Socialist programme, but certainly some of the arguments by which some of those Socialist programmes have been supported. He has also done us the honour to borrow from this side of the House one of the best provisions which characterises his present Budget. The right hon. Gentleman has made it a cardinal feature of his financial proposals that he should give relief at the lower end of the Income Tax scale, that particular point in the Income Tax scale where the Income Tax payer shades off into the class who pay taxation almost entirely indirectly, and which has always presented problems of great difficulty to the various Chancellors of the Exchequer. But it was Sir Stafford Northcote, in 1876, who set the example which the right hon. Gentleman has now followed, and as to which the whole Liberal Party, including the right hon. Gentleman, voted against the Conservative views in that year. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his conversion to the policy of Sir Stafford Northcote.

Sir W. HARCOURT: You are quite mistaken; I did not.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman may have abstained, but his colleagues voted, and his Leader voted, and the bulk of the Party behind him voted. I have not studied the Division List; I have not thought it worth while; but what I wish to emphasise is the notorious fact that in that year a proposal exactly analogous to this was made by Sir Stafford Northcote. It was resisted by the right hon. Member for Midlothian and the Party of which he was the most important Member; and therefore I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman, if not on his own conversion, at all events on the conversion of the

Party behind him. I have no criticism to make on this part of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, which relieves the lower Income Tax payer of a heavy burden and which lightens the load of taxation for a class which, probably of all classes in the community, have had most reason to complain of the weight of the financial system which they have had to support. Having said this much in praise of the right hon. Gentleman's Budget, I pass to the policy which he has formulated and to the speeches in which he has formulated it. Talking of the speeches the Chancellor of the Exchequer has delivered on this question, let me say that I think the way he has chosen in debate of treating the brewers and publicans, on whom he has imposed this additional tax, is not the way in which any Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to treat an interest already heavily weighted, and which he proposes to weight still further. He has thought it consistent not only with good taste but with his position in this matter not only to heap taxes upon them, but to heap insults upon them. He has evidently gone at them as an unpopular class whom he could insult with impunity, and whatever may be his views as the author of a Local Veto Bill, whatever attacks he may think it fitting to make on brewers and publicans when defending that Bill, I venture to suggest that in his capacity of Chancellor of the Exchequer he should deal rather more tenderly in his speech with interests he professes to attack by the proposals he is making to the House. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget proposal in connection with the duty on spirits and on beer were directed to this end—that the taxpayer, whose sole contribution to public purposes is made by indirect taxation, should bear his portion of the public burdens which are now thrown upon us—I should have had very little to say upon this part of the scheme and should not have dwelt at any length upon it. But that is not the purpose, and, in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's view, not the effect of this proposal dealing with the Beer and Spirit Duties. According to him, this is not a tax on the consumer. According to him, neither the result nor the intention of the Government is to throw upon the consumer any additional burden whatever. This is an attack upon a class; it is intended to be an attack upon a class; and whether it be really contrived to injure that class or not, or whether—as it more probably will—it injures other classes than those against whom it is primarily directed, the fact remains clear and certain that the Chancellor of the Exchequer in this part of the Budget had no other end in view than to mulct by an additional duty the brewers of beer, the manufacturers of spirits, and the retail dealers in beer and spirits. Sir, that is the animus which has been evident in the original speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and still more in the speech which he delivered in the course of the Debate which we had upon the first night on which we discussed the Budget Resolutions. As regards the brewers, I think it was in the original speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he said they were a class peculiarly suitable for additional taxation, because at the present moment they made excessive profits. That has been contradicted by those who probably know quite as much of the brewing trade as the right hon. Gentleman, and I have never yet heard before that the remedy for excessive profits is excessive taxation. Hitherto it has been regarded as a cardinal doctrine of English finance that, in regard to excessive profits in any business—such, for example, as were explained to us this evening by the hon. Gentleman who made a great fortune in the early days of the woollen industry in Yorkshire, such profits as may be always made in special circumstances in special industries—the cure, if cure be required for excessive profits, is the natural competition which excessive profits invariably bring; and if there be not this competition in the brewing trade it is a proof, if proof be required, that excessive profits do not exist in that industry. I do not in the least deny that there are very likely great brewing firms who make large profits. There are great firms in every industry which make large profits. There are great firms who, by the goodwill they have acquired, by the magnitude of their capital, the excellence of their plant, or for some local reason or other, make profits far above the ordinary and average profit of the manufacturers. That is no reason for mulcting the trade. That will cure itself. Competition will step in, and the products of that trade, as well as of any other, will gradually assimilate themselves to the trading profits made by the rest of the community. If the treatment of brewers by the right hon. Gentleman was unjust and ungenerous, I think his treatment of the publican trade was even more unjust and ungenerous. He came down to this House, and he explained that he had sent round from public-house to public-house in various parts of the City of London some experts who collected samples of brandy, and, I suppose, gin and other liquors, and had then made an estimate of what these spirits originally cost and what they were sold for in the various public-houses where they were handed over the counter; and he said in such and such district the profit was 100 per cent., in another 130 per cent., and in another 150. I do not recollect the right hon. Gentleman's specific figures, nor are they material to my argument. I am informed his actual figures are incorrect. I am informed that the actual difference between the cost of the article and the price at which it was sold never amounted to anything like that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer attributed to it. But that is a small and not the main point. The main point is this. What retail trade is there in the country which, tested by these tests and measured by these standards, would not be open to the same strictures? What does the right hon. Gentleman suppose would be the difference if he went and asked for articles over the counter of a chemist's shop? What difference does he suppose exists between the retail price of that article and the wholesale price of it and the cost of manufacture? Is is not an elementary fact which ought to be present to the mind of every Member of this House, and most of all to the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the profits of retail trade are not to be estimated by the difference between the cost of production and the price on sale, but are to be estimated according to the profits made by the retailer upon his plant, upon his rent, and upon his labour? That, and that only, affords the proper test of whether any trade is making — I will not say excessive, but exceptional profit. That test was not applied by the right hon. Gentleman, and if it had been very different results would have been brought out from those with which he attempted to seduce the House when we were discussing this question a few nights ago. This principle—laid down, I venture to say, now for the first time in the history of English finance—that the mere fact that an industry is profitable is a reason for mulcting it, savours of Oriental and not of Western finance. It is a time-honoured custom of an Eastern potentate, who delights to encourage any industry in his country, because he knows when he has encouraged it to a suitable point he can then come down and withdraw from it all the profit which has been gained by the unhappy manufacturer. These, Sir, though they are the principles of Oriental finance, ought not to be adopted in our finance, and I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has found no better reason for imposing this 6d. duty on spirits and beer than the fact that those who manufacture and retail these articles happen to enjoy exceptional prosperity at the present time. But I now pass to the question of graduation and the equalisation of the Death Duties, which, I suppose, the right hon. Gentleman himself would regard as the principal glories of his financial proposals. Here, though I do not wish to go into the metaphysics of the question, I must take exception to this new doctrine, stated, I believe, in this House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the first time and endorsed to-night by the Member for the Rushcliffe Division. Those two gentlemen alone have, so far as I know, advanced and defended this astonishing proposition—namely, that the property of a deceased owner really belongs altogether to the State. It is said, "It is only by favour of the State that some fragments of the property are handed over to the heirs." Was ever such a doctrine advanced in this House before? What was the basis of this proposition? The right hon. Gentleman read something from *Blackstone*—and I have no doubt he can find some authorities for the principle on which he based his conclusions—the principle—namely, that the right of bequest is the creation of the law. Well, most of our rights are the creation of the law. I do not deny, nor do I suppose for a moment that anyone else will deny, that the law has guarded that right and limited and regulated it. But does that raise a precedent for taking away a man's property after he has bequeathed it? If the law were altogether abolished, that right and every other right would vanish at a stroke. For instance, the right of personal liberty is also the creation of law just as much as the rights over property, and is guarded and limited and regulated; and if the law were abolished, these rights also would cease to exist. I suppose that if no law existed, the weakest would become, as they have often been before, the slaves of the strongest. I do not know who would be the slaves and who the masters. I am not at all sure, if the right of personal liberty were abolished, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer might not find himself in the unpleasant position of a slave; and a very awkward slave to manage, I believe, his master would find him. I think, therefore, we may take it that this right of bequest does not differ from any other right which we enjoy. No quotation from *Blackstone* can make clearer that which is solidly based on the foundation of common-sense. I do think that it is necessary for us to quarrel over the first principles of the Death Duties and graduation scheme as they stand in the proposal of the Government, because those principles extend outside the only possible system of taxation which can be safely followed. It has been laid down over and over again that the only safe and plain principles are in arithmetical proportion, and if these are left, then we at once get into an unsound, unsurveyed sea without a compass to guide us. I am convinced that if these new doctrines are allowed to pass into law great inequities will result and great injustice will be done. The principles that have before been always adhered to have given a plain, obvious, convenient, and useful rule for the guidance of the imposition of taxation, and have afforded a broad basis for calculating the arithmetical ratio that the contributions of one class should bear to the contributions of the other classes; but the working out of the details of the scheme must be left to the wisdom of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his Party for the time being. On one point we are all agreed—namely, that we must give our consideration not to the question of whether any particular principle of arithmetical graduation is good or bad, but whether the proposal now brought forward is a good one or a bad one. Whether graduation is good or bad, this graduation is bad, and that is the only proposition I care to maintain, or which I think it worth while for the House as practical men to labour over at half-past 10 o'clock at night on the third day of the Budget Debate. Now, surely we have a right to ask, if the Government gives up a recognised and safe system and adopts one that is unknown and unsafe, their reasons for so doing. This system, if carried out, must involve an enormous increase in expenditure arising from several causes—such as increased staff, litigation, and the difficulty of having proper valuation made of a class of property that is admittedly most difficult to estimate correctly. We do not know yet, indeed, whether it is proposed to enforce the same rates upon securities which can be at once valued—such, for example, as Stocks and shares, the market value of which can always be ascertained—as will be charged on land. If so, that is an obvious injustice. Now take it from the point of view of the community. One of the first principles that ought to guide any Chancellor of the Exchequer in the matter of taxation is to take care that his tax shall bring in money without hampering trade or make financial operations difficult. What will be the result of this proposal? I am informed than an immense amount of business, of industrial undertakings, is constantly registered in the name of two or three directors. It is essential in order that these firms may be worked to the best advantage that sales should take place at the shortest notice. What have you done? The Stock or shares will appear in the name of an individual and you will have to go through the mill of Somerset House if one of them dies, in order to see that no evasion is practised, and that none of these gentlemen gain an advantage in any form from the fact that one of their number is deceased, and the result of that will be that wherever Stocks or shares are held in more than one name, though it may be that none of those persons in whose names they are registered has any beneficial interest, the whole of the Stocks or shares will be under probate. But that is not all. I go further, and I say as regards land you have by your provisions gone against the traditional policy of the Party to which you belong, a policy in which I may say I entirely agree, and have made it more difficult to transfer land. You have increased the difficulties of both seller and purchaser. Any man who inherits realty and personalty will not be able to obtain probate for his personalty until the whole question of the realty has been looked into. [An hon. MEMBER: No.] Well, will the right hon. Gentleman explain why it is not so. I fail to see how any final settlement can be come to even about personalty. Take this case. Suppose a man dies in England possessed of £5,000 in England and £500,000 in New Zealand or Australia—not an absurd or extravagant supposition perhaps. The duty on his whole property will exceed the total amount of the English property. How is he to get the property in New Zealand home to pay? I understand that the system of obtaining probate in the colonies is first to prove the will in England. Then the documents are sent out to the colonies, but you cannot prove the will in England until the money is paid, and you cannot take any steps in Australia until the will is proved in England. So you go on in a vicious circle, the unfortunate man in the meantime being entirely deprived of his property. Then other difficulties will arise. He will have to wait until he has gone through the difficult and elaborate process of proving in Somerset House the value of the land and other assets which he may have 10,000 miles away. The time taken by the post even will be many months; but suppose there is a dispute about the property? The only appeal is to the High Court here. You would have to bring over witnesses from the other side of the world, and there would be a litigation costly to the Treasury and ruinous to the unfortunate person concerned, before he could make any use, public or private, of the property left to him. I give this merely as an example showing how inconvenient the scheme is, first as regards the public, then in reference to the commercial world, and next to the individual immediately concerned. I say with regard to land you have by these provisions run against the traditional policy of the Party to which you belong. Your policy will make it more difficult than ever to transfer land from one individual to another. You have increased the number of difficulties which the seller of land will have to go through, and you have increased the difficulties which a purchaser will have to go through. You have drawn a trammel over that kind of exchange which you specially desire to make easy and free. I now pass to more important principles. I ask whether this is a sound mode of taxation—a just and sound mode in itself? We all know that in their origin these Death Duties were more in the nature of Stamp Duties on the transfer of property than anything else. They have gradually increased, and their increase has caused some convenience and some inconvenience, but when used as a principal engine of taxation by the Government their evils are enormously magnified. But what was a tolerable inconvenience becomes an intolerable injustice when increased to the extent proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Notice, in the first place, that the incidence of the Death Duties is abitrary in its operation. There is nothing more certain than that a man must die, but there is nothing more uncertain than the period at which he will die, and if we adopt this system some properties will be severely mulcted, while other properties will get off lightly. The process you are adopting in public taxation is precisely similar to the universally condemned system of copyhold tenure. It is a system of arbitrary interference. Everybody agrees that that is an impossible tenure as between landlord and tenant. Why is it more expedient when you have to deal not with landlord and tenant but with estates and individuals? It is in its character so essentially arbitrary that on account of that very fact alone you should not attempt to exact the money you require for public purposes from this particular form of taxation. That is my first criticism upon the broader aspects of the question. My next criticism is that you cannot possibly carry through this Bill—I defy you to carry it through Committee — unless you are prepared to break existing settlements The injustice and the inequity would be too intolerable unless you are prepared to release the existing holders of property from the bond and sway by which they have been tied up by their predecessors, who made their settlements under very different conditions. Observe, in the first place, that many persons have actually borrowed from Insurance Offices upon their reversion. The whole value of that reversion is arbitrarily altered by the operation of this Bill. It is not merely, mind you, that there has been an increase in the Death Duties; but that that increase, in regard to any particular reversion, is purely arbitrary and accidental in its character, for it does not depend on the amount of the reversion, but on the total amount of the property left. The result is that the Insurance Offices, who have lent up to the extreme margin of the reversion, based upon the existing Death Duties, or upon any natural increase of them, may and will find themselves—if they are dealing with small reversions on very large properties—arbitrarily mulcted and robbed by the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Take another case, where the proposals are obviously unjust. Supposing, after this Budget passes, a man succeeds to a large settled estate, of which half consists of very valuable pictures. I am myself acquainted with an individual who must inherit picture collections worth £200,000. If such persons could sell a portion of those collections to pay the duties which you impose on them, they would have no more reason to complain than any other holder of property. But as they are bound by their settlements not to sell, and yet as they are to be mulcted in spite of the settlements upon the full capital value of those pictures, the result will be that these unfortunate people will not be able to keep body and soul together, and will be deprived of half their income by your action. I mean to say that that cannot stand. Before this Bill passes through Committee it is certain, at all events, that you will be obliged so to relax the existing settlements that people will be able to sell settled property which brings in no income to meet the obligations thrown upon them by this action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is one more point connected with art collections and property of this kind on which I will say a word. I will address this remark especially to the hon. Member for Battersea. I do not know what his views on this question may be; but I want to know if he, as a member of the London County Council, had to deal with a property like, say, Holland House—and I do not know whether that is settled or not—does he or does he not think it would be for the public interest that it should be at once forced into building land? Recollect, all the natural cupidity of the owner would induce him at present to put it into building land. But he may be restrained by a sentiment which we should all respect; and I believe that that restraint is better for the public interest. If you pass this Bill and relax, as you must, all settlements, every property like Holland House must at once be cut up; and I think the loser would not be the owner, who would be, in fact, a much richer man than before, but the public who gain largely by the fact that private and historic sentiment keeps such properties for a long time outside mere commercial operations of buying and selling! I do not think that this is the time in which to consider at large the problem of our great private art collections. But I will say deliberately that any action of ours which is going to drive those art collections—not into the market; I have no objection to that—but out of the country into regions where Death Duties on this scale do not prevail—any mode of taxation which has that effect impoverishes not the individual who sells the pictures, but the public of which that individual is a member. It is most eminently worthy of the consideration of the House whether, without doing any injustice to the Exchequer, some plan cannot be devised by which a result so tragic for our national interest may be avoided, or, at all events, may be partially mitigated. I have to pass rapidly over these topics, for time presses. I pass hastily to the next essential and important part of the right hon. Gentleman's Budget on which I desire to pass a severe comment and criticism. That is his method of estimating the value on the capital amount of the property. I have many objections to that method. My first is that it will be, like many other proposals in the Bill, expensive and litigious. At present you have a simple formula upon which you can decide the value of various properties with which you have to deal. Henceforth you will have no formula. You will have to trust to the expensive opinion of a paid expert. Whenever you get the expensive opinion of a paid expert, you will always find a more expensive and highly-paid expert to give you exactly the opposite view. The result will be that you must have litigation, out of which no profit will come to the State or to the legatee. There will only be profit to the gentlemen who are called in to give their opinion as to the capital value of the property concerned. But I have a second objection to this system. It is doubtful. No one knows what the issue will be. The man making a settlement for his wife and children will not know what sums he is dealing with. At present he knows pretty well how rich he is, how his property will be estimated by the Exchequer, and how much, therefore, he must leave to each person whom he desires should share in his property after his death. After this Bill passes, people will not know where they are. They will not know what the value of their property is. It will rest upon the arbitrary supposition and conjecture of a single individual, checked possibly by a Department of the State, and by the High Court in the last instance. But it will depend upon a conjecture which no man is really able to form at the time that he makes his will. That is an immense hardship, and it is a hardship which will be increased as every other hardship is increased under this Bill—by the fact that every value which a man leaves acts and re-acts upon another value, and that if he makes a mistake with regard to one portion of his property, the whole bulk of his property may be taxed more or may be taxed less in consequence. It may affect all his testamentary dispositions, which will be very hard upon him and those who may succeed him. I object myself very much to being governed by valuers. We are already governed by inspectors; we are now going to be governed by valuers, and I do not think such a system ought to be encouraged by this House. It is a system so conjectural in its character that when you are dealing, as you must deal under this Bill, with large properties, for which there is no market, I cannot imagine how the right hon. Gentleman can form any estimate as to the yield of his Death Duties, or how anyone can tell how a certain kind of property is to be rated after his demise. Sir, I have a more serious objection to this taxing of capital values. Has it occurred to the House—I am sure it has not occurred to the Chancellor of the Exchequer—that in treating all these capital sums as if they were alike you are treating as identical things which are essentially diverse in their nature? There is no comparison properly to be made between the capital value of sums in Consols and the capital value of a certain kind of estate for the purpose of taxation, because one can be cut up and the other cannot be cut up. It is like cutting up a cartoon of Raphael's or a Madonna of Raphael's into small squares of canvas, and thinking each will sell for one-hundredth part of the total amount. The fact which I am bringing to the notice of the House no one can deny, but I do not think its bearing has been quite realised by the House or by the Government in connection with this taxation of capital values. Your whole justification for graduation—and it is a very powerful justification—is that you desire to exact an equal sacrifice from every individual in the community so far as it is possible. The nominal capital value is the same in the case of the owner of £101,000 in Consols and the owner of an estate worth £120,000 or £130,000, on which there is a mortgage of £20,000. Nominally the capital value of the two is the same, but consider the position of the two individuals when you proceed to tax them. The owner of the Consols is taxed at the rate of 6 per cent., pays £6,000, and is poorer by about £240 a year, and there is an end of it; but the owner of the estate worth the same amount cannot borrow and cannot sell unless he sells the whole estate. He cannot borrow because there is a second mortgage on his estate, and he will have to borrow on a second mortgage. Therefore, he will be obliged to sell the whole of his estate in order to meet the obligation imposed upon him by the Government. I am assuming that a large portion of the estate brings him no rent. Do you think you are exacting equal sacrifices from these two men? The one man is £240 a year poorer, but he still has his £4,000 or £5,000 a year; he leads the same life, and probably does not cut himself off from a single luxury. The other man is uprooted from his home, driven from the place where his father lived before him, and where he hoped his children would succeed him. He has to change his mode of life; he is driven from the country to the city or to cities abroad. I desire to exempt no class in the community from his fair share of taxation, but to tell me that your object of equal treatment is carried out in the cases I have described is to show an ignorance of the elementary facts of human nature and of the obvious conditions of society under which we live, and to show that you have not considered the equitable incidence of the Budget which you propose. My fourth objection to this treatment of capital values I will explain in a sentence. As I understand, you think your proposal as to capital values particularly fair because that which cannot be sold will be taxed very lightly. How will that work out? The most unsaleable property in England at this moment is the large agricultural estate which has been systematically starved by its owner, the estate where the buildings have fallen into disrepair, where every farm ought to have money spent upon it, where everything has been cut down to the very narrowest limits of expenditure. That estate will pay nothing, or hardly anything, under these duties, while the estate which is saleable will pay very heavy duties. The result will be to put a premium upon taking capital off land and to put a penalty upon putting capital on land. The good landlord is to be penalised; the bad landlord is to be encouraged by being allowed to get off scot-free. I think that argument will have some effect with gentlemen opposite, and there is another argument which ought not to have escaped their notice. This question has been largely argued from the point of view of the country gentleman, and there are many persons on both sides of the House—not belonging to the Party of which I am a Member—who do not see much use in retaining country gentlemen. They say, "He is not a man we desire to see continued," and they think if the worst result is to destroy the squirearchy, let the squirearchy go. I do not agree with that view, although I do desire to see a large increase of yeoman farmers, which we will not see under this Bill. What I wish to point out to hon. Members is that, though this measure may paralyse and destroy the existing land system in England, it will not have the effect of substituting any other or any better plan. Hon. Gentlemen wish to see—and I quite understand the ambition, although I do not agree with it altogether—they wish to see substituted for large properties a flourishing peasantry owning and cultivating their own land. There is nothing in this Bill which can by any possibility conduce to such a result. What this Bill can do and will do is to paralyse the existing system. It will empty your country houses; it will hand over small sporting estates to become portions of a large aggregate owned by some American millionnaire. There is nothing in it, and there can be nothing in it, which will approach by one year or by one day the millennium to which you look forward. Much is to be said for a large system of yeomen owners. There is nothing to be said for a system of large squires who cannot live upon their property, and who are driven by your system to exact rents from the soil which they spend in London or on the Continent. That is the result, and that is the only result, so far as the distribution and management of landed property is concerned, which can by any possibility follow from the Budget which you have proposed. One other criticism I must pass upon this part of the measure—the valuation part of the measure, I mean. You have adopted graduation because you think it is the method to produce equality of sacrifice. Why have you not the sense or the courage to make your system consistent? I understand the advantage of taxing a man at an increased ratio in proportion to his wealth; I do not understand the advantage of taxing a man exceptionally, not according to his own wealth, but according to his father's wealth, and that is what you do under this Bill. You say a property worth £1,000,000 shall pay 8 per cent. I do not argue your figures or your scheme; but that is not what you are doing. What you are doing is to make the people who inherit the property pay 8 per cent. whether they inherit £1,000 or £990,000 of it. What is there equitable in that? Where is your system of graduation? Can you conceive anything more grotesquely unjust than a system of that kind? Hon. Gentlemen appear to think they can tax the dead. I can assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, whatever be his merits as a financier, they do not extend to the other world. You can tax the living, but you cannot tax the dead. If your idea is to have a graduated tax upon property, it must be upon property owned by living individuals, and not upon property owned by dead individuals. I am sure the public do not realise the extraordinary absurdity of your present proposal. A man dies and leaves £10,000 to his son. He is taxed at the rate of 3 per cent. A man dies worth £1,000,000 and leaves precisely the same sum of £10,000 to his son or his daughter. The son or the daughter has to pay not 3 per cent., but 8 per cent. The thing is unarguable. Graduation may be the greatest discovery of the age. It may be the medicine which is to cure all our financial ills, but in Heaven's name apply graduation like rational beings and graduate property in proportion to the amount enjoyed, and not in proportion to the amount left by those who can no longer enjoy it! I pass rapidly now to what I regard as the greatest blot of all in this Budget—to the absurd pretension of its author that he has done away with the existing inequalities of taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is not the mere head of a Department whose duty it is simply and solely to collect sufficient funds from the public to carry on the financial expenditure of the year. His business, especially if he professes to be a financial reformer, is to look at the burdens which every man pays, not merely to the Imperial Treasury, but into the local treasury, and to consider the sacrifices which the public, be it the local public or the general public, call upon the individual to fulfil, and to apportion the burden fairly among every class and every individual of the community. No attempt to consider local burdens has been made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has refused to realise that realty has at this moment to bear a share of public burdens, though not Imperial burdens, far in excess of anything which equity can require. We are told that these are hereditary burdens; and I do not quarrel with the phrase; but if you admit hereditary burdens you must also admit hereditary immunities. The two things go together. What has happened is this—realty and personalty were each liable to taxation for all those local purposes; but personalty in ancient days bore a small proportion to the whole wealth of the country, and was exceedingly difficult to get at. Realty, therefore, patiently bore not only its own share of burdens, but also the share which ought to have been borne by personalty. It did this for many hundred years, and the fact that it was thus specially burdened is now used against it; and actually the owners of realty are told that for having sat patiently under these exceptional burdens they have no claim to redress. The owners of personalty have the courage to say that the fact that they have so long escaped what it was their fair duty to bear constitutes a claim to a perpetual right to escape, and that realty is to bear the burden. I cannot agree with that. I admit freely and fully that our existing system is full of anomalies, for which it is impossible to give theoretical justification. But there was, after all, some kind of rough justice in it. This House finding that realty had borne so long a great deal more than its fair share of the common weight of public and local taxes combined, it was not unjust to throw upon personalty some special obligation in regard to new taxation. That is not perfect theoretical finance; it is open to many criticisms. But the idea that you are going to remedy this injustice and these anomalies by the simple process of levelling up in one part of the scale and leaving untouched every injustice in the other part of the scale is utterly unworthy of any man who attempts to approach this question in a statesmanlike spirit. I am perfectly conscious I am able to touch only on the fringe of this great general question. I can truly assure the House that I, at all events, do not desire to protect any class, rich or poor, from its fair share of burdens. If it be true that the wage-earning class of the community now pay too much let the inequality be redressed. At all events, the present system has been formed principally by the labour of Liberal politicians. But, while I desire equality, I do not mean to sit down patiently under what I regard as a crude simplification which absolutely ignores all the difficulties that have to be dealt with. It is complained by some hon. Gentlemen that we are adopting an absolutely unprecedented course in voting against the Budget as a whole. That may be true; I am not aware that we can adduce a precedent; but it is because we object, I will not say to the principle on which the Budget is founded, but to the method in which those principles have been carried out in the details. This is what we object to, and you cannot very well embody it in a Resolution. No Resolution not so long as a speech could give the slightest idea of the character and nature of the objections we feel. They are the accumulation of a large number of criticisms which we focus in this Resolution that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. What are the principles of wise legislation violated by this Budget? One of the first principles of sound taxation is that your taxes shall be easy of collection, cheap in collection, and shall not cause undue irritation. Is that condition satisfied by this scheme? Another condition of sound taxation is that it should be certain in its incidence, that those who have to pay it should know exactly what they have to pay and when they have to pay it. Is that condition satisfied by this Budget? Another condition is that it should be equal as between similarly situated individuals. Is that condition satisfied by this Budget? Another condition is that it shall be equal as between classes. Is that condition satisfied? Another condition is that it should not hamper industry, that it should leave capital free to go where it is most useful, and that it should encourage expenditure upon land. Is that condition satisfied? The accumulation of these objections is one which can be only adequately met by a Resolution which says that the scheme as a whole as formulated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a bad scheme. It is not because I wish to relieve any individual of his fair burdens, not because I wish to quarrel with the metaphysics of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but because I believe this Budget to be unjust, to be costly, to be radically inequitable, that I shall follow my hon. Friend into the Lobby in support of the Amendment when he goes to a Division.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): After this long and protracted Debate, I am glad we have at last arrived at the point which is to determine the fate of the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has admitted that the course which the Opposition has taken is absolutely without precedent. He knows as well as I know that the Second Reading of a Bill brought forward by the Government to meet the financial obligations of the State has never before been met by an Amendment to read the Bill a second time this day six months. The moving of such an Amendment is a measure far more extreme than that of stopping the Supplies. On former, but on rare, occasions Amendments have been moved to the Second Reading of a Budget Bill, but they have been Amendments which have fixed upon some particular point, and they have generally—I think almost universally—been moved by some responsible Member of the Opposition. I do not complain of this proceeding. I know it is not aimed so much at the life of the Budget as at the life of the Government. It was thought well to spread the net wide enough to embrace all those who, whatever their views might be on finance, desired to overthrow the Administration. The temptation of securing the aid of an Irish contingent to overthrow a Home Rule Government was too great to be resisted. I do not complain that right hon. Gentlemen opposite have succumbed to it. There is, however, one advantage in the form of this Motion for which I welcome it. It dispenses me altogether from going into all those dreary and minute particulars which belong to Committee, and which are not appropriate to the Second Reading of this Bill. The Opposition have raised what the lawyers call the general issue upon the principles of the Budget. I am glad of it. It enables us to do to-night what we most desire—namely, to take the opinion of this House first and of the country afterwards. [*Opposition cries of* "When"?] Do not be in a hurry; you cannot do it to-night. It enables us to take their opinion upon the principles upon which the financial proposals of the Government are based. The course of the discussion has followed pretty accurately upon the lines upon which it was originally launched. The twin champions who moved and seconded this Amendment represented the two most powerful and the two closest monopolies in this country—the monopoly of land and the monopoly of liquor. That was an antagonism for which Her Majesty's Government were perfectly prepared. I will deal first with what I may without disrespect call the liquor opposition. The right hon. Gentleman has accused me of not only taxing the liquor interest, but of insulting it. But why does he say I insult it? He said, first of all, I had violated all the former principles of finance on this side of the House, and one of his charges against me was that I had said this tax would not fall upon the consumer, but upon the trade. That is precisely what his own Chancellor of the Exchequer said when he put his duty on the liquor interest. I quoted his language in my Budget speech. This is the language of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "I beg the Committee to observe, therefore, that I am obtaining my Revenue by the addition of a tax which cannot be felt by the consumer."

That is the charge the right hon. Gentleman brings against me; and then he says I am attacking the liquor interest as no Chancellor of the Exchequer ever did before, and upon principles which I ought not to have adopted. I quoted also the language of my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian, who said—

> "We ought to raise the duty upon them as much as we can consistently with the policy and the necessity of preventing the growth of a contraband trade."

Therefore, these are principles which are not unknown to previous Chancellors of the Exchequer. There are people outside who impute to me personally as well as in my character of Chancellor of the Exchequer with having made these proposals from personal spite against the liquor trade. I do not think there is any gentleman in this House who believes that I am capable of such a thing. I have made these proposals, as I said in my Budget speech, not upon social grounds but upon fiscal grounds exclusively. I stated that I had taken the pains to ascertain on the principles stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian whether the trade was in a condition on which the tax might be imposed without oppressing it. I said that I considered it was a trade which was making very large and increasing profits, and I said that if I were challenged I should be prepared to prove it. I will just state a fact which will show that I was justified in my assertion. Of course, I am not going to give the particulars of any individual or of any firm; but I am going to state, and I am justified in stating, what is the general condition of the trade in the country. In 1884 the total profits of the trade assessed to the Income Tax were £6,316,000. In 1893-94 they were £10,177,000, or an increase of £4,000,000, or nearly 70 per cent., in the course of the 10 years. The remarkable thing is this: that after that increase of the duty by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the increase of the profits has gone on continuously. Those are facts which justify my assertion. What is the history of this extraordinary profit? I stated that, in my opinion, the main history of these profits was the great fall in the price of material. Generally speaking, you may say that in the last 20 years the price of material used by the brewers and distillers has been something like 40 per cent. lower. The price of malt has fallen 44 per cent., sugar 37 per cent., rice 23 per cent., hops 14 per cent., barley 30 per cent., oats 28 per cent., maize 34 per cent., and molasses 21 per cent. Of course, with an article the material of which falls to that extent—the prices not being substantially lowered—you will naturally expect the profits would be very large. The trade being in this prosperous condition it should take a share in the extra demands which it is unfortunately necessary to make upon the country, but the remarkable part of it is that, indignant as they are, they tell us that they are not going to suffer. The hon. Member for Wimbledon (Mr. Bonsor) tells us that the trade will not suffer at all, and he says they will take care of themselves. Throughout the whole of his speech his tears were reserved for the growers of barley. He told us that the brewers were always anxious to use the best

English barley, and in proof of that he pointed out that in 1876 barley was 45s. 6d., and in 1893 it was 28s. 10d. If he could buy barley at 28s. 10d., why did he not use it? In the same speech he added that in that period the consumption of sugar had increased between two and threefold, until in 1893 it had attained the enormous total of 2,122,000 cwt., while the consumption of malt had decreased. Here is this friend of the English barley grower, who can buy barley at half the price, yet goes and buys sugar. The fact that barley has fallen in price is not due to any increase in the duty on beer. Its fall in price has not been equal to the fall in other grains. I think, therefore, that I may leave the solicitude of the hon. Member for English barley growers to take care of itself. Then there was another champion of the brewing interests—the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh (Mr. Barton). He spoke on behalf of the great firm of Guinness, and his solicitude was not for the English barley growers, but for the small brewers. He did not pretend that the firm of Guinness was going to suffer, but he wept tears—I might almost term them saurian tears—for the small brewers in Ireland. What destroyed the small breweries? Not the additional taxation on beer, but those gigantic monopolies which have bought up all the free houses, and turned them into tied houses, converting the publicans from independent tradesmen into mere agents for the brewers.

Mr. BARTON said, the firm of Guinness had never owned a tied house.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Of course, I entirely accept the statement of the hon. Member, but that does not alter the absolute truth—that the small brewers of the country have disappeared under the influence of these great monopolies. Before I leave this liquor question, I should like to know what is the financial position which right hon. Gentlemen opposite are ready to adopt in regard to it. You accept to-night, by the alliance you have made, and by the vote you are about to give—you accept the principle that beer and spirits cannot and ought not to bear additional taxation. [*Some Opposition cries of* "No!" *and Ministerial cheers.*] Will you stand by that? With the prospect of a great and increasing expenditure, are you going to cut off from yourselves, in order that you may get a vote against the Government to-night, the right to tax beer and spirits in the future? What, then, are you going to tax when you want more money? Are you going to tax tea, or sugar, or corn? Or are you going to put it all on the Income Tax? The right hon. Gentleman opposite has severely criticised my methods of dealing with those duties. Well, the right hon. Gentleman has a characteristic method of his own, which I have not thought it right to imitate. In 1889 he imposed an additional duty on beer. Under pressure from the brewing interest he held out hopes that, if the Revenue permitted, a remission would be made in the next year.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I did not say that. I did not use those words.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Well, I copied them this morning. These conditions were fulfilled. The Revenue did admit of a reduction in the next year, and in fulfilment of his pledge the right hon. Gentleman stated in his speech on the Budget that the increased Beer Duty would be remitted that year for Imperial purposes, and then at the end of his speech he proceeded to re-impose it for purposes of local taxation to replace his unfortunate Wheel and Van Tax. Well, that is characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman. I prefer my direct methods to such shifty finance as that. I do not know whether the brewing interest would be particularly pleased if I were to imitate the example of the right hon. Gentleman. I now come to the other great protagonist to the Budget—the landed interest. They come forward, as they always have done, to insist upon their privilege of exemption from taxes which are paid by other people. The capital of the country has been estimated at £11,000,000,000, and out of that £2,200,000,000 is the proportion of realty. Realty now pays £1,150,000 out of £10,000,000 to the Death Duties, or a little more than one-tenth. Under our scheme it will pay £2,500,000 out of £13,500,000, or a little less than one-fifth, so that it will still have a slight advantage as compared with personalty. If it paid its full proportion it would pay £2,700,000 instead of £2,500,000. The figures we have given on this subject have been disputed by the hon. Member for Surrey, who was good enough to tell me privately the grounds on which he objected to them. But the estates which he had in view were all great estates and settled estates and estates subject to graduation, and most of them, I think, London estates. I said to him, "If you would only allow me to read to the House that list, you would carry the Budget by acclamation." When the hon. Gentleman used those estates as a measure of what would be the result of the proposal on other estates, that was a fallacy, because there is no doubt that upon estates of that character a very large amount of additional taxation will be raised. That is our object. But upon the moderate estates the increase will be extremely small. I would remind the House that when they talk of realty a great confusion arises. Realty means both land and houses, and land, in the ordinary sense of the word, is the smaller moiety. It represents £600,000 of the additional taxation we propose to raise, or about one-sixth of the whole. It is to be subject to a recoupment under Schedule (A) of £160,000. From whom does this complaint come? Not from realty in the fullest sense of the word. The complaints come from land as distinguished from houses. We have heard very little complaint from settled personalty which will come under this additional taxation; we have heard little from realty other than agricultural land. They are apparently not unwilling to take their share in burdens which must fall upon the nation. In addition to the liquor interest, we have had strong complaints from the landed interest. Leaseholders, an important section of the community, are already subject to the whole weight of this taxation, which the freeholder is exempt from. What is the ground upon which the complaint is made? There are two grounds: One is the payment of rates. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Goschen) undertook to redress this inequality three or four years ago, and has stated that he had done so. Shortly after that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford (Mr. Chaplin), speaking on behalf of the Government on a Motion that the Death Duties ought to be equalised, because this compensation had been given in respect of rates, said that the occupier paid a certain sum for the use of the land, and in that sum were included rates as well as taxes, and that the effect upon the owner was, that if the rates were high he got less rent, and if they were low he got more, and the right hon. Gentleman maintained that it would not be difficult to show that ultimately the whole burden of the rate fell on the owner of the land and no one else. Upon that statement the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian remarked as to its importance, and pointed out that these subsidies, of which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) was the author, were an actual gift of £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 of money, made to the owners of the land.

MR. GOSCHEN: Not to the owners of land, but of houses and lands.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: Sir, I beg your pardon. These are the words—

> "But this fact stands, that as the whole of that portion of £6,000,000 which went to the relief of rates fell on the rural land, it is in the long run a sheer, unmixed, undiluted gift to the landlord."

That is the statement which I wish to place on record, and a most important statement it is. It has become the habit of hon. Gentlemen to refer to the statements of the right hon. Member for Midlothian in 1853—

> "There is a point I want to notice in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, because he did me the honour to refer to a speech made by me in 1853 on the subject of the Income Tax, and he had founded on that reference to my speech a case of grievance for the land. These are the circumstances in which I endeavoured to show that land under Schedule (A) pays more than 7d. in the £1, and that the burden upon it is greater than it is commonly supposed to be. My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer reminds me it might be urged that has been redressed by the contribution. If we are to speak of that, I will say in my opinion it has been a great deal more than redressed by that contribution. The fact is that while realty has received an enormous boon at the expense of the Consolidated Fund—a boon of which the whole in the case of rural land goes to the landlord, and of which a large part, not the whole, in the case of land not rural goes to the landlord—while that boon has been given to the landlords of the country in rural and urban districts and is a charge on the Consolidated Fund, a compensation has been given to the Consolidated Fund in return which is, I believe I am right in saying, a few hundred odd thousands. The question between the rates and the Consolidated Fund is not a settled question. No proper equivalent, no fair and proper consideration, has been given to the

Consolidated Fund by a readjustment of taxation in respect of that enormous boon which has been handed over to the rates; and that a further and larger change than has yet been made in the Death Duties is, in my opinion, a matter of absolute necessity on the plainest grounds of justice before Parliament will have fully vindicated its character as a just distributor of benefits and burdens among the several classes of the community."

Now, the landowners have received their satisfaction, and more than satisfaction, in respect of rates, and it is time that we should equalise the rest. The other objection on the part of the landed interest is one the truth of which I most absolutely acknowledge. They say that agricultural land has fallen in value and also the income. That is unfortunately true, but it is on that diminished income and value, and on that alone, that the tax will be placed. They will have to pay upon what they have, and not upon what they have not. I have endeavoured to show the House how small that amount will be, but we have examples—I do not say wisely brought forward as exceptions to the great principles of finance—of the inconvenience which may fall on particular persons and in particular cases. The hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool brought forward the case of the estate of Savernake, and remarked upon what difficulty the present owner of Savernake would be placed in by this legislation. But we cannot found legislation in finance of this character upon the difficulties of an estate in the condition of Savernake. The hon. Member for Sleaford came forward, and he passed an eulogium upon an estate in exactly the opposite category—an eulogium in which I desire to associate myself—the great estate of Chatsworth, which has been administered for generations in a manner to the advantage of its possessors and of the country. But when he tells me that taxation of this character is going to destroy the magnificent fortune of the possessors of Chatsworth, that is an argument which carries little weight with me.

**Mr. CHAPLIN**: The right hon. Gentleman entirely misrepresents me. I did speak of Chatsworth, but I merely mentioned Chatsworth as a type of a great number of others which it resembled.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I am very glad to hear that Chatsworth represents a great many other estates, because, if so, the landed interest is not so badly off. But a still more extraordinary argument was used by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) just now. He said that Holland House, under these circumstances, might be turned into a building estate. I am sorry to say that a good deal of Holland House, since I first recollect it, has been thrown into building estate. But you cannot deal with broad questions of finance——

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: I did not use that as an argument in favour of the owner of Holland House, but as an argument in favour of the public. It was a public loss.

***Sir W. HARCOURT**: If turning any of Holland House into a building estate was a public loss, a great deal of it has been lost already since I first came to London. But you cannot deal with great questions of finance by consideration of particulars of this character. But, Sir, I observe, in all these Debates, though you put forward Savernake, Chatsworth, and Holland House, there is one class of landowners who have prudently kept in the background—namely, the great owners of ground values. It is upon them, as they know perfectly well, that the chief burden of this taxation will fall, and therefore they have put forward the case of every other class first—the yeoman farmer, the licensed victualler, or the ruined brewer. There is an idea in private circles, I believe, that there are Dukes who expect that they may lose millions of money over this system, and, if so, I suppose it is because there will be millions to meet the demand. That brings me to the question of graduation. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition commenced his speech this evening by criticising the fact that I, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had a Colleague in Lord Rosebery who favoured all the schemes I brought forward. I am sorry that I cannot congratulate him in return on having treated his Chancellor of the Exchequer in the same favourable manner. The right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Leader of the Opposition, denounced the other day the principle of graduation in the strongest terms, and applied to it such words as "plunder" and "fiscal robbery," and he reproached me, his unworthy pupil, of being ignorant of the elementary principles of political economy. He quoted something from the works of Sir Louis Mallet, and he told me that no great economist had ever been in favour of graduation. He even went so far as to refer to John Stuart Mill as an authority for that statement. I certainly was surprised that he was so ignorant of the fundamental difference of taxation as regards graduation in the case of Death Duties and the Income Tax respectively that he did not even realise that one was a tax paid by the living and the other a tax levied upon the dead. I will now read you passages from some authorities in support of our scheme to impose additional Death Duties. The passage from Mill's book is as follows :—

> "The principle of graduation, as it has been called—that is, the levying a higher percentage on larger sums—though its application to general taxation would be a violation of first principles, is quite unobjectionable as applied to legacies and inheritances. I conceive inheritances and legacies exceeding a certain amount to be a highly proper subject of taxation, and that the revenue from them should be as great as it can be made without giving rise to evasion."

There was a passage referred to the other night by my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen where Adam Smith, after speaking of the necessities and luxuries of life, said it was not unreasonable that the rich should contribute not only in proportion to their revenue but something more than that proportion. Is that not the principle of graduation? What was the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, with regard to House Duties, but graduation on a lower scale? The right hon. Gentleman, I think, before he undertakes to assail the principle of graduation, should be a little more careful in reading his authorities and a little less reckless in quoting them. But is gradution to be condemned on another ground? The right hon. Gentleman has never been so insulted as by my quoting the case of the Australian colonies. He says that the land ruined by Australian mutton is now to be wiped out by Australian finance. That is the language of the Imperial Party. These are the advocates of the federation of the Empire. Is he going to keep out Australian mutton, which gives cheap food to the working classes? Why should he have such a contempt for Australian finance? Land is the principal capital of Australia, and their experience in dealing with it is very valuable. They have great advantages there which we have not in England. There land is free from fetters, and you may depend upon it that day by day the people of this country will become more desirous that land should be treated as land is treated in Australia—exactly on the same footing as personal property. The sneers of the right hon. Gentleman at Australia will come home to roost. Very often smart sayings are very foolish things, I have a little refreshed the memory of the right hon. Gentleman as to the views of the doctors of political economy upon the question of graduation. I confess myself that I do not abide altogether by the dogmas of the professors upon this question. As on the bimetallic controversy, when I find all the professors on one side and all the men of business on the other, I follow the men of business. In this case, with regard to graduation, you do not want the professors to teach you whether men of immense fortune, like ground landlords, or whether millionaire brewers should pay something more *pro rata* than the small man, who has to struggle on on narrow means. That question will not be settled by the professors; it will be settled by the common sense and justice of the community at large. The right hon. Gentleman used tentative language: he said he did not absolutely commit his Party against graduation, but for fear that should not take effect the right hon. Member for Sleaford got up, hammered the nail in, and pronounced graduation to be *anathema maranatha*; but the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition seemed a little timid and did not pronounce quite in the same sense. But if the Member for St. George's, my predecessor and my successor, hold these views on graduation, that will go a long way to settle the question. But there are other political forces in this country, and I should like to know what the views of Birmingham are upon this subject. Graduation is now part of the authorised programme of the Liberal Party; but it was part also of the famous Unauthorised Programme. These were once the views of Birmingham on this question—

> "In my opinion, there is only one way in which this injustice of the incidence of taxation—this injustice of the greater weight of taxation upon the poor—can properly be remedied; and that is by a scheme of graduated taxation, a taxation which increases in proportion to the amount of property taxed. It need not necessarily be a graduated Income Tax; it might be more convenient to levy it in the form of a graduated Death Tax. I do not care anything at all about the method; all I want to offer for your serious consideration is the principle of such taxation. In my opinion, it is the only principle of taxation fair and just to all classes of the community."

Now, Sir, I should like to know, comparing that with the speech which we heard the other night from the right hon. Member for St. George's, which of these two conflicting authorities is in the future to govern coalition finance? Which is to be the "predominant partner" in that joint stock concern? Then the right hon. Gentleman opposite sets up two totally inconsistent arguments. He says that the Death Duty will be "evaded," but as a future Chancellor of the Exchequer he retracts that offensive word and says it will be "avoided." There was a time when the right hon. Gentleman denounced settlements as a fraud upon the Exchequer. If the duties are going to be avoided there cannot be hardship, and if they are paid they will not be avoided; you cannot have it both ways. The right hon. Gentleman put as a most extraordinary case the case of the duty being at the highest possible rate. What is the highest possible rate under the present proposal? It is 18 per cent. What is it at present? It is 14 per cent. Do you mean to tell me that if the duties are not evaded at 14 per cent. they will be totally evaded because it is raised to 18 per cent.?

MR. GOSCHEN: Aggregate values?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Aggregate values. We at least have placed this principle of graduation before the country as a just system of taxation. We have placed it before the country, and we place it before the House to-night as a fundamental principle of Liberal finance. If you get rid of this Budget you will not get rid of the principle of graduation. It will survive the factious combinations of to-night. If you desire to go to the country against the principle of graduation we are ready to meet you. You have before you a future of ever-increasing expenditure—demands not only for the Army and Navy, but for every kind of social reform. You will have increased taxation, and you will find that these vast fortunes cannot refuse to bear their share, proportionate to their ability to endure the burden. And, Sir, I will venture upon this prediction. You may have to accept, aye, and you very likely will yourselves propose, provisions less moderate than those contained in this Bill. You have done that before. What has the right hon. Gentleman said upon the subject of the Income Tax? Here, again, we have, I will not say the advantage, but the disadvantage of being in direct opposition to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's (Mr. Goschen), and here again the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour) took the extraordinary course of throwing overboard his own Chancellor of the Exchequer. The very strongest part of the speech of the right hon. Member for St. George's was his denunciation of what we had done in the Budget to extend the limit and to enlarge the abatement. He said it was destructive of the Income Tax, and he denounced it in the most vehement language. And at the very beginning of his speech the Leader of the Opposition says that is the part of the Budget of which he most approves. The right hon. Gentleman said, and the Leader of the Opposition repeated it, that I had voted against that proposal. The right hon. Member for St. George's "told" against the proposal in the Division, but he did not "tell" me, and in that he was mistaken. But of all the charges brought against me by the Member for St. George's the most vehement, I think, was that which he made against me in reference to this extension of the abatement. Sir, how was the ground on which we have proceeded, the ground which the right hon. Gentleman denounced as mischievous, socialistic, and destructive of the Income Tax, described by the financier whom he was then opposing? Sir S. Northcote referred to the hardships endured by one portion of the trading classes — the struggling professional men and the struggling tradesmen—upon whom the Income Tax pressed most severely, and he said—

> "In reply to official inquiries which he had made the other day he was informed that those who would profit most by the revision were a very large number of clergy, ministers of all religious denominations, a large number of officers in the Army and Navy, a large portion of the Civil Service—struggling men in all professions, some of whom were just getting their heads above water—many tradesmen, and the widows and single daughters of all these classes."

The right hon. Gentleman denounced that policy and divided against it.

MR. GOSCHEN: That was the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone).

SIR W. HARCOURT: That may be; but we have had experience of it for 18 years. The right hon. Gentleman is of the same opinion now, and he denounces it still. If you defeat this Budget, every one of those classes will lose this advantage.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman did not hear my speech.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, I heard the right hon. Gentleman's speech, but is the right hon. Member for St. George's to be the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the Party opposite? It was impossible for a man to have pledged himself more definitely and distinctly against this principle. There are three doctrines of finance. There is the doctrine of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour); there is the doctrine of what we may call the future Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen); and there is the Birmingham doctrine, which cannot be reconciled with either. There is one great crime I have committed with reference to the Income Tax. I have proposed these exemptions. I do not know whether you mean to go to the country against these exemptions. But there is one exemption against which the right hon. Gentleman did not protest—one compensation under the Income Tax—and that was the grant to the landowners. He had nothing to say against that. Well, it is a little characteristic the way in which that compensation has been treated. Up to this time we have always been told that an enormous loss to the landed interest was involved in this distinction under Schedule (A)—that it far more than outweighed the advantages they derived under these exemptions from Death Duties. The moment it is given, they say "thank you for nothing"; they put the money into their pockets, and are not even thankful. The landed interest may behave in this way, but the relief is not so regarded by the owners of small house property. I have received letters from all parts of the country in which the writers express themselves as most grateful for the concession made. There was a small man who said he had put his earnings into house property, and he wrote—

> "The news is too good to be true. I am told we are going to have 10 per cent. upon house property."

I wrote to him, and said—

> "Dear Sir,—The news is better than you believe, because you are going to have 16 per cent."

I now come to the most important point of all, which is the treatment which the small properties will gain under this Bill. Upon that subject the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's (Mr. Goschen) said very little. I have always regarded the right hon. Gentleman as the great apostle of the gospel of wealth, but these considerations lie below his political horizon. I wish to call attention to the effect of this Budget upon small property. While it provides for a permanent increase of more than £4,000,000 in the national resources, the Budget makes no increase, but a decrease of taxation on the different classes of persons owning no more than £1,000. Taking the Death Duties alone, there is a decrease upon taxation of this class, and taking the Death Duties and the Income Tax together there is a much larger decrease. Taking free personalty, settled personalty, and realty together, properties under £1,000 pay under the existing Death Duties upwards of £300,000 a year, while under the new system with Legacy and Succession Duty swept away, with the single equal duty of 1 per cent. up to £500 and 2 per cent. up to £1,000, they will pay about £200,000 a year. I say nothing about the saving of expense and trouble by extending the facilities now granted to properties of £300 to properties of £1,000. It comes to this—that the measure will have the effect of increasing the Death Duties as a whole by one-third, and at the same time of reducing by one-third the payments of these small people. Under the head of free personalty alone there are no fewer than 36,000 of these small estates out of a total of 51,000 in 1892-3. The reduction is not so large on the Death Duties, but it is much larger upon the Income Tax. I would like to give a typical case—that of a man dying with personalty worth £500. Take the case of a small tenant farmer leaving £500, or of a small shopkeeper or clerk leaving a similar sum. At present such a property pays a minimum duty of £10, and it may, under the Legacy Duty, have to pay as much as £59. In future under the Government proposals it will pay £5 only, and under no circumstances will it have to pay more. Surely this will be a great benefit and boon to an enormous proportion of the population. Now I will touch upon the Income Tax. What may reasonably be taken to be the income of a man who leaves a capital sum of £500, the result of his personal savings? We may take it to be £200 a year. He will gain under the Budget provisions £1 6s. 8d. a year on his Income Tax, so that he will be able to discharge in four years all the liability of his property under the Death Duties. Depend upon it that the country is going to judge between us on these proposals. These are things more cared for in the country than Savernake or Chatsworth. In the case of realty we come to the small holdings of £500 value, which is a very common kind of property. Taking the least favourable case, such a property left by a man to his son aged 44 will under the Budget scheme never pay more than £5. The Budget, while it confers a great boon to the farmers in respect of Death Duty on their stock, lessens the amount of the Income Tax they will have to pay. I have to apologise to the House for having occupied their time for so long; but I have endeavoured to draw their attention, not to the details of the Bill, not to the difficulties of administration, not to anticipations with which the right hon. Gentleman has filled so much of his speech, but with regard to which I think that the authorities at the Inland Revenue, by whom I am advised, know a great deal more about than the right hon. Gentleman as to the methods and the possibilities of carrying them into execution, but to the great principles of the Bill. I am glad that by the help of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's this question has been extracted from the chicane of paltry details, and has been reduced to a conflict on fundamental principles, and that we have at last come to a clear issue on conflicting principles of finance. Given the necessity for raising large sums for national defence by increased taxation, how is the money to be got? We affirm and you deny that the powerful and wealthy liquor interests should make a further contribution. Secondly, we affirm and you deny that for the purposes of the Death Duties realty and personalty should be treated alike.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I did not deny it.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Then why do you want to throw out the Budget? We affirm and you deny—[*Opposition laughter*]—I do not know which of you is going to deny—that taking a moderate system of graduation immense wealth should pay at a higher rate than smaller fortunes. That is a clear issue. We affirm and you deny—it remains to be seen how long you will venture to deny—that if great expenditure requires a high rate of Income Tax, the burden should fall more lightly on the humbler incomes—[Mr. A. J. Balfour: I asserted it.]—and until the late First Lord of the Treasury and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer can make up their minds on the subject of finance, you are not entitled to throw out the Budget. These are clear issues, which divide our principles from those of the Torty Party.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, they do not.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: If I may use a vulgar expression, I would venture to say that you are beginning to see that it is not safe for you to "face the music." Against these principles you array yourselves to-night. I know not whether that strange combination which you have entered into with those to whom on vital questions you are most opposed will assist you to-night. But if you should defeat this Budget, you will not defeat the principles on which it is founded, those principles being based on just and equal taxation, adjusted to the capacity of the various classes to bear the burden on those proposals. We challenge the vote of the House of Commons to-night, and when the time comes we shall ask the judgment of the country.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 308; Noes 294.—(Division List, No. 44.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

### ADJOURNMENT (WHITSUNTIDE).

Resolved, That this House at its rising do adjourn until Monday, 21st May.—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

## *MOTION.*

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### SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE, 1894.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

*Mr. **RENSHAW** (Renfrew, W.) said, he rose to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from that portion of the Code (1894) of the Scotch Education Department which proposes to alter the ages in Section 133 of the Code from 'between 5 and 14 years of age' to 'between 3 and 15 years of age,' and until it is provided that the new arithmetical requirements under the 28th section in Standards IV., V., and VI. shall not come into operation till 1895."

He said, he felt that he ought to apologise to the House for intruding upon it at this hour of the morning, but the fact was that the Code was published on the 10th of April, and therefore, unless attention was called to it before the House rose for the holidays there would be no opportunity for discussing the matter. In proposing to alter the age limit in Scotland, and make the period of school age "3 to 15" instead of "5 to 14" as at present, it was suggested——

Sir J. **CARMICHAEL** (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I rise to a point of Order. As this Act becomes effective on the expiration of the 10th of May if not opposed, I wish to ask you whether that period has not expired?

Mr. **SPEAKER**: This is a sitting of the 10th, and although 1 o'clock has passed, it is by the Rules of the House still a sitting of the 10th.

*Mr. **RENSHAW** was not surprised that hon. Members opposite would rather avoid the discussion; but it was essential this matter should be discussed before the notice became effective. He believed when these changes were brought into operation in England in 1891 there was a protracted discussion in the House on the question, and they had a right to ask for the same indulgence when discussing a question of great importance to the education of Scotland. It had been contended that because the age in England had been fixed from 3 to 15, that that limit should also apply to Scotland. But there was no analogy between the two cases. A great inducement to the House and those interested in education in England to agree to fixing the ages between 3 and 15 was that the grant in England was to be 10s. per head on the children in average attendance. But in Scotland the amount available from the Probate Duty and Customs and Excise Acts, whatever it might be each year, was distributed on the basis of average attendance, and the Code provided that the attendance might not be reckoned of any scholar in a day school under three or above 18, and therefore Scotland could derive no monetary benefit by adjusting the ages to correspond with those in England; and by spreading this grant over a larger number of children they would secure no educational advantage whatever. In Scotland there was a very great difference indeed as to the disposition of parents to send their children early to school, as contrasted with the feeling in England. He had come to the conclusion that the opinions formed in Scotland on this question were sounder than those which prevailed in England and produced better educational results, and he said that children who came into school at five, or even six, years of age, accomplished, in the great run of cases, far better educational work in schools than those who came in at an earlier age. In England over 10 per cent. of the children in inspected schools were under five years of age, and in Scotland only about 2 per cent. In the Debate in 1891 the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland expressed the opinion that the number of parents who were anxious that their children between the ages of three and five should go to school was increasing. He confessed he did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman in that view, and he could show from the figures that such was not the case. In England for the year ending 31st August, 1893, 30 per cent. of the estimated population between three and five years of age were in the Registers of the schools, whilst in Scotland, out of the estimated population between three and five in the same year, of 200,000 children, only 12,693 were on the books of the elementary schools, or 6 per cent., as compared with 30 per cent. in the English schools. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that Scotch parents were undergoing a gradual change in this direction, but as far as he could read the figures the indications were directly to the contrary effect. As a matter of fact, the Report published for 1889-90, immediately preceding the right hon. Gentleman's speech of 1891, showed that there were on the books in Scotland, of children between the ages of three and five, not 12,693 scholars, as there were last year, but 6,307 scholars; therefore, there had been a substantial decrease since 1890. He was bound to say he thought the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood the feelings of the parents in Scotland in this respect. They were just as strongly against sending children of tender age to school as before. They had just had the triennial elections of School Boards in Scotland, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman whether he knew of any single instance in Scotland in which candidates had claimed support for a proposal of this kind? He believed the School Board of Glasgow, one of the most important in Scotland, had furnished a very earnest representation in opposition to this proposal, whilst the Govan School Board had also expressed its objection to the proposal. Whilst these Boards had expressed their opinion in regard to this question, the county and smaller burghal School Boards would be still more opposed to this change. The change would necessitate the provision of more accommodation, and the sending of children to school at such a tender age would undoubtedly prevent the healthy development of their bodies. In the case of rural schools, where the teachers had already more than enough to do, they would render the task doubly difficult if they were to send in these very young children, and would thus retard, instead of assist, educational progress. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to meet the reasonable demand they made that the age should be kept at five, as at present. The change made in the Code in regard to arithmetic, the hon. Member complained, was a serious matter, and the notice of the change having been given in the middle of the school year, it would, in many cases, be exceedingly difficult for the school teachers really to meet the extra demands that were made upon them with regard to instruction. He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from that portion of the Code (1894) of the Scotch Education Department which proposes to alter the ages in Section 133 of the Code from 'between 5 and 14 years of age' to 'between 3 and 15 years of age, and until it is provided that the new arithmetical requirements under the 28th section in Standards IV., V., and VI. shall not come into operation till 1895."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): There is an old proverb which urges us to seize time by the forelock and not to put off till to-morrow anything that can be done to-day. I must say I wish my hon. Friend had attended to that proverb, and there was no day during the last month on which he might not have called the attention of the House to the subject he has discussed to-night, and I venture to say there is not one single word he has spoken to-night which might not have been spoken with equal effect any time during the last four weeks. My hon. Friend has magnified this business to an extraordinary degree. He says it is an unfortunate thing that at a time when School Boards have only been recently elected these great changes should be made. What are these great changes? I will take them in an inverse order from my hon. Friend. The first is the improvement of the standard of the arithmetic of the Scotch children. In this matter I hope the House will take it for granted that we have not gone one bit beyond what is taught to the children in England. Scotland was greatly behind England with regard to teaching arithmetic in the higher standards. We, by this Code, have raised the quality of Scotch teaching to that of England, and I must say that, as being responsible for the education of Scotland, I should not have been content to do anything less. But in doing that my hon. Friend says we have done an injustice towards the teachers in the schools because they will be unable by the time the annual examination comes on to have brought their children up to the same degree of efficiency in the new studies that they would have obtained in the old. That is very true indeed; but whom do you think is likely to be more impressed with that than the Scotch Education Department itself? The Scotch Education Department is not very likely to so arrange its affairs that it will get a smaller grant from the Imperial Treasury. You may be certain we have taken due precaution against that. There might have been some force in the hon. Gentleman's objection in the old days when each child was examined by individual examination, and the grant to the school depended upon it, but now the school grant depends upon the general proficiency and general condition of education in the school. On the other hand, the Inspector has to report, and we have had printed a Circular, which we are going to send round to all our Inspectors, as I have announced in the House on one or two occasions at question time, out of which I will read a paragraph—

> "In view of the changes which have been made in the arithmetic of Standards IV., V., and VI., I am to request that up to the end of 1894 you will, in examining these standards, make allowance for the fact that during the greater part of the school year the scholars have been taught with a view to examination under the Code of 1893."

And if in the case of any schools that is not sufficient to enable them to get the full grant if they had done their duty, in that case we will postpone the examination under these new Rules, and examine the children under the old Rules as far as they have got in them. But in any case we shall impress upon our Inspectors that the schools are to be judged by the standard to which they can attain. I think I have thoroughly satisfied my hon. Friend on this point, and so I go to the question of age. Now, here I must say my hon. Friend has very greatly exaggerated the situation. You would imagine we were passing a compulsory Act which would bring the Scotch children into school at an earlier age than that at which they enter it already. You would think by what my hon. Friend said that we were going counter to the feeling and practice of Scotch affairs. Sir, we are exactly following the practice of Scotland and embodying it in the Code. What is the present practice in the School Boards of Scotland? 13,553 children under five years of age at present go to the free schools of Scotland. Out of these 13,553 children only 33 pay fees at the present moment. Between 13,000 and 14,000 of these little children go to school, fees are exacted from only 33 of them in the free schools, and we ask accordingly that this practice may be embodied in the Code. We likewise ask—and this is, perhaps, a more important request—that the parents of the children above 14 and below 15 may have the right of sending them to free schools for free education. What is the practice there? There are 10,412 children at this age who now go to these schools, and of these 9,334 at this moment go free, and all we ask is that the odd thousand shall be allowed to go free likewise. Why do we ask this? I will give the House two reasons. The first is that it is the rule in England. It was the rule laid down in England by the late Government, and I do not think that our Government would be justified, considering the views that we credit ourselves with with regard to elementary education if we remained year after year, 10 years after 10 years, behind this Regulation which the Government of the right hon. Gentleman opposite has laid down in England. We wish to work up to the English practice, and there is another reason—namely, that we have the best reason for believing that this is the opinion of the Scotch Representatives. In the course of the last Parliament this question was raised, a Division was taken, and 26 Scotch Members voted in favour of the change in the Code which we have now proposed and 11 against it; therefore we have the opinion of the Scotch Representatives in favour of it. This is the law in England already; it is being practised in Scotland now; we shall make no great change, but simply embody in the Code what is now the practice in the country. These are matters upon which no one occupying the position of Secretary for Scotland, which I occupy, would consent to go back. I cannot consent to leave Scotland in an inferior position to England with regard to the quality of the teaching of arithmetic, or the right of a Scotch parent to send a child for free education at the same ages enjoyed by parents in England.

Sir C. PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he wished, first, to call attention to the fact that at this time of the morning, as usual, they were engaged in discussing a Scotch topic which he, for one, considered was of very much greater importance than the Secretary for Scotland was inclined to allow. The right hon. Gentleman said they ought to follow the practice of England. That practice could only be followed if the matter was recast from its foundation; but if they began piecemeal they would introduce nothing but a false analogy, by introducing the analogy of England. It must be known to every hon. Gentleman who knew anything of the subject that the theory on which the free grant was distributed in England was utterly different from beginning to end from that on which it was distributed in Scotland. Suppose that at this moment the ages in England were as they were in Scotland—5 to 14. The diminution of the age from five to three in England would bring with it a very much larger freer grant than in Scotland. It would bring in 10s. per head of the children added. In Scotland it would not have that effect at all; it would not result in bringing in another penny to the free grant, but would merely bring about a new distribution of the grant amongst the existing schools in Scotland. That of itself seemed to be a very valid reason against the insertion for the first time in the Scotch Code of this most material alteration. But there was another matter to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred, and on which the House was entitled to information. That was whether this alteration was demanded as a matter of principle, or by the public of Scotland? In point of principle the reason why hitherto in the Code the ages were 5 to 14 was that those were the compulsory ages in free education. Now they were about to extend free education above and below the compulsory limit, and that was a new departure. They were also entitled to some information as to the effect of this proposed alteration on the School Boards and on the rates. Undoubtedly they would have, in many cases, large demands for additional accommodation in various districts. School accommodation was a heavy burden, and in some parts was cheerfully borne; but if they were going to compulsorily impose a large amount of additional taxation to bring children to school that did not go naturally to school at such ages—withdrawing the matter altogether from the discretion of the School Boards—they would create a great deal of discontent and work a great deal of injustice. On those grounds he heartily supported the Motion of his hon. Friend.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 40; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 45.)

## SCOTCH EDUCATION CODE, 1894.

Mr. A. CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said, he had put down the following Motion:—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her to withhold Her assent from the following part of the first of the detailed schemes appended to the Scotch Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools, as in Code 1893, and renewed in Code 1894—namely, in Section III. (page 20), 'Co-operative Societies, their work in distribution and production.'"

He would not, however, move it at that early hour of the morning, if the Secretary for Scotland would allow the question to be raised when the English Education Code came up for consideration.

Sir G. TREVELYAN: This question of co-operation with regard to England was raised upon the Scotch Code, and on that occasion my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council assisted me in a very able speech. If the question with regard to Scotland is raised on the English Code I will do my best to repay my right hon. Friend for his assistance. If it should happen that the House is opposed to the reference to co-operation in the English and Scotch Code—which I hope will not be the case—I shall feel myself bound by that decision. I therefore hope that hon. Members will not allow the Scotch Code to pass.

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 170.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday, 21st May.

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS) (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 41.)

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday, 13th June, read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

## *MOTIONS.*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (GAS) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board, under "The Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870," and "The Public Health Act, 1875," relating to the urban sanitary district of Wokingham, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 226.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board, under "The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890," relating to the urban sanitary districts of Sheffield, Sunderland, and Wigan, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 227.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 10) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary districts of Abram, Stevenage, Stockport, and Wilsden, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 228.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 11) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board, relating to the urban sanitary districts of Birmingham, Brighton, Burnley, Darwen, Lancaster, and Sheffield, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 229.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 12) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the counties of the Isle of Wight, London, and West Sussex, and to the boroughs of Margate and Tunbridge Wells, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 230.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 13) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders relating to the Isle of Thanet and Stone Joint Hospital Districts, and to the Leigh and Atherton and the Stalybridge and Dukinfield Joint Sewerage Districts, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 231.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board, under the provisions of "The Poor Law Act, 1889," and "The Public Health Act, 1875," relating to the Metropolitan Asylum District, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 232.]

### SAVINGS BANKS (SOCIETIES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arnold Morley, Bill to amend the Law relating to deposits in Savings Banks by charitable and other societies, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Arnold Morley, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 233.]

### CHIMNEY SWEEPERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Labouchere, Bill to make better provision for the registration and regulation of Chimney Sweepers, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Labouchere, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Maden, and Mr. Jacoby.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 234.]

### CERTIFIED TRUANT INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

Copy presented,—of General Rules and Regulations for the Management of Schools for the Detention of Truant Children [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER (LODGERS).

Return presented,—relative thereto [Address 26th February 1894; *Mr. Strachey*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 115.]

### EAST INDIA (CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS.)

Copy presented,—of Papers relating to the Question of holding Simultaneous Examinations in India and England for the Indian Civil Service [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, Nos. 1356 (Spain), and 1357 (Paraguay) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### EDUCATION (SCHOOL BOARDS, &c.) (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented,—of List of School Boards and School Attendance Committees in England and Wales 1st April 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS AND WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889.

Copy presented,—of Scheme for the Management of the Funds applicable to the Intermediate and Technical Education of the Inhabitants of the County and Borough of Swansea, in the matter of the Free Grammar School in Swansea, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

### BEHRING SEA AWARD ACT, 1894.

Copy presented,—of Order in Council of the 30th April 1894, intituled the "Behring Sea Award Order in Council, 1894" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### EXTRADITION.

Copy presented,—of Order in Council of 30th April 1894, for giving effect to a Treaty concluded on 21st March 1893 between Her Majesty and the King of Roumania for the mutual Extradition of Fugitive Criminals [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT ACTS, 1844 to 1866.

Copy presented,—of Order in Council of 30th April 1894, approving a Convention signed on 24th April 1893 between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary for the establishment of International Copyright [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### PILOTAGE

Copy presented,—of Order in Council of 30th April 1894, approving certain Bye-laws made by the Sligo Harbour Commissioners, in lieu of Bye-laws Nos. 42 and 43 of the Pilotage Bye-laws approved by Order in Council of 9th May 1892 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### CIVIL SERVANTS (RETIREMENT AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE).

Copy ordered, "of Treasury Minute, dated 9th May 1894, stating the circumstances under which certain Civil Servants have been retained in the Service after they have attained the age of 65."—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

### FINANCIAL RELATIONS, 1894-5 (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing, for the year ended the 31st day of March 1895: (1) the estimated amounts which will be contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland to the Revenue collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the estimated expenditure on English, Scottish, and Irish Services, which will be met out of such Revenue; and (3) the estimated balances of Revenue to be contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland respectively, which will be available for Imperial expenditure."—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

Return presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118.]

And, it being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at ten minutes
before Two o'clock till
Monday, 21st May.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, 21st May 1894.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

### THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION OF DIRECTORS.

**Mr. BARROW** (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that, in the matter of Ellis, Drew, and Company, Limited, now in liquidation, an order for public examination of directors and others was made by the Judge of the Brighton Court on 7th July, 1893; and that, owing to pressure of business in the Brighton Court, such examination has not yet been concluded; and whether any steps can be taken to expedite public examinations under liquidation proceedings in the County Courts by enabling them to be held before the Registrars, as under the Bankruptcy Act?

**The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. Burt, Morpeth), who replied, said: I am aware of the delay which has taken place in the case referred to. Under the existing Rules it is not in the power of County Court Judges to delegate the holding of public examinations under the Companies (Winding Up) Act to their Registrars, but the Board of Trade are considering whether any, and if so what, remedy can be applied.

### THE UGANDA DEBATE.

**Sir C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can now name the day for the Uganda Debate?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): It will be necessary next Friday to take the Vote on Account, and I cannot, therefore, name that day for the discussion on Uganda. In the early part of next week the Government desire to make as much progress as they can with the Finance Bill. I will, therefore, name Friday week for the Uganda Debate.

**Mr. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): What is the business for to-morrow?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: The Local Government (Scotland) Bill.

### LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL CONTROL).

**Mr. BARTLEY**: May I ask whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer intends to go on with the first Motion standing in his name for leave to introduce a Bill to establish local control over the traffic in liquor?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: No; I cannot name a day for proceeding with it.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: Then, Mr. Speaker, I must ask you whether it is in Order for the Government to keep a Bill upon the Paper month after month without any intention of going on with it?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: There is nothing unusual in keeping a Bill on the Paper.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: It has been rather "year after year." It has been on the Paper for two years.

### THE NILE WATERWAY.

**Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT** (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether the Government have any information as to a French or Belgian Expedition reported to be approaching Lados, on the Nile waterway? Is not the whole of the Nile waterway within the sphere of British influence?

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): I only received notice of this question two hours ago, and I must ask the hon. Member to postpone it.

### NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Robert Threshie Reid, esquire, Q.C., for the Dumfries District of Burghs.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### PAROCHIAL ELECTORS (REGISTRATION ACCELERATION) BILL.—(No. 175.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [30th April] "That the Bill be now read a second time."

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** (Kent, Thanet) asked if it was not the case that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had given notice of his intention to oppose this Bill?

**Sir W. HARCOURT** replied, that it had been understood the Bill would be treated as a non-contentious measure.

***Sir C. W. DILKE** said, he might take it upon himself to assert, for the information of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet, that the Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool was anxious that the Motion for the Second Reading of this Bill should be gone through on the last occasion the measure was before the House, and it was entirely by inadvertence that he spoke past 12 o'clock.

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** said, he had nothing to do with the attitude of the hon. Member for the West Derby Division. All he wanted to know was whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol—who spoke with quite as much authority as the hon. Member for the West Derby Division—had given notice of his intention to oppose the Bill? He might add that he himself certainly intended to oppose it.

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** said, that no doubt the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was quite accurate in saying that when this matter came on for discussion in connection with the Local Government (England and Wales) Bill it was intimated by the Leader of the Opposition that it would be treated as non-contentious, but a good deal had happened since then. On the occasion of the discussion on the Report stage of the Local Government Bill, he pointed out that there was very little to be gained, and much risk was incurred, by the adoption of the suggestion of the Government for accelerating the Register. He pointed out that the amount of time saved would be almost infinitesimal, and he suggested the Government would be well advised if they allowed the ordinary law to take its course. The period at which the Register would come into operation under the ordinary law would be January 1, 1895. At most a couple of months would be saved by the acceleration of the Register. No doubt at the time of which he spoke the proposal of the Government was, comparatively speaking, received without disfavour by those Members who sat on the Conservative side of the House. But what was the position now? The Bill, so far from carrying out the intentions of the Government, had already been recognised as failing to do so on one or two important points. Some time since he received from an experienced public officer who had had the management and control of one of the largest Local Government administrative districts in the country, a letter pointing out that the amount of additional labour thrown upon the various officers employed, and the difficulty of ensuring accuracy in the preparation of the lists, rendered it extremely undesirable to attempt to hurry matters too much. That view would no doubt be endorsed by all who had had experience in registration work, and probably representations to that effect had been conveyed to the Government, which evidently had come to see that it would be impracticable to have the Register accelerated as much as was at first intended. The Government had, in fact, found out that he was right in warnings which he had given them on the authority of an experienced County Council officer. In consequence, in the first clause of the Bill it was now provided that the Registers should be completed not by November 8, the date at first named, but by November 22. Thus nearly one-fourth of the time which it was at first hoped to gain by this Bill was given up, and the advantage which the Bill was intended to secure was still further reduced. In fact, the Register would only become operative at the fag end of November. Having regard to this fact, he was more than ever inclined to press on the Government that, so far as this Bill was concerned, the game was hardly worth the candle. A Bill of some kind might be necessary, but that it should be framed with the definite object of getting the elections this year was surely undesirable. The sole object appeared to be to enable the Government to say that the Parish Councils were brought into operation in the same year in which the Local Government Bill was passed. The House knew very well that in the country districts the holding of elections in the fogs of November and December was strongly deprecated. In the scheme of county government carried out by the late Government, the original intention was that the elections should be held in November. But the House would recollect that afterwards an amending Act was passed for the purpose of enabling the elections to be held in the Spring—he believed in March. That, he thought, was the period in which the elections were now held, and he submitted that with this precedent before them the Government should reconsider their proposal to accelerate the elections for Parish Council purposes, and to hold the elections at a period of the year which experience had proved to be most inconvenient. He trusted that this Bill would not be further pressed upon the House.

SIR C. W. DILKE said, that the matters concerned in the present Bill were so highly technical and difficult that it was not easy to make them clear to the mind of anyone who had not bestowed upon the details a good deal of attention. The right hon. Gentleman who last spoke asked the Government to drop the Bill.

MR. J. LOWTHER: No; what I suggested was that they should abandon the proposal to bring on the registration prior to May next.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he gladly accepted the correction. The right hon. Gentleman would admit that some Bill was absolutely necessary in the present case to prevent an infraction of the law. His objection to this measure ran in a direction opposite to that indicated by the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman, who seemed to think that more time should be allowed public officers in which to perform the new duties to be imposed on them. Well, he held that where the time was most needed was in the earlier stages of the preparation of the lists. In his view, it was not necessary to allow more time for printing the Registers. The original intention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India was, that the Register should come into force on November 8. Now it was thought that about a fortnight longer should be allowed. He failed to see why this extension of time was required. The whole of the borough Registers had to be got ready by November 1, and he did not see why the other Registers should not be ready at the same time. These Registers were to be printed only in the shire towns where adequate means were available for printing them promptly. There was no need to print them locally in the various parishes. Although in some counties the revising barristers' lists were edited by the county clerks and others—in the case which he had in his mind corrections were made in the presence of the agents of both Parties after the revising barrister had passed the lists—there was no legal authority for such a practice, and he saw no reason why time should be allowed to do it. This being so, the time allowed by the present Bill would be entirely thrown away. In some parishes there would be new divisions for different purposes, and, if time were to be allowed at all, it should be to enable the County Councils to put the revision of the ownership lists on a secure footing. He would ask his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board what was the meaning in the Bill of the phrase "county lists." Strictly speaking, they were all parochial lists. The greatest difficulties would occur, not with the occupiers' lists, but with the new lists—the ownership, lodger, and service lists—and principally with the ownership list. He wished to know how the Register was to be made this year? for this was a subject of great importance, and one upon which Local Authorities differed sharply. The joint committees of County Councils were now engaged in creating wards and altering the boundaries of parishes. These changes would not be completed until too late for the purposes of the Register about to be drawn up, and consequently very considerable difficulties would arise in connection with the new lists. He feared that the Circular issued by the Local Government Board on the subject of registration this year did not efficiently deal with these complications. Some county clerks were directing the Overseers to revise the lists, whilst others were telling them they must not do so, as they could not do so under the existing law. He had no doubt that the latter were right, as the law gave no power to the Overseers to revise the lists. He would suggest, in face of the difference of opinion that existed amongst county clerks and, he believed, amongst Assistant Overseers, it would be well to issue an Order in Council dealing with this matter, or else to call a Conference of County Authorities to consider it. One or other, in his opinion, must be done. He had seen that in some counties they were issuing the old precept and the old list without the slightest change. In other counties they were issuing letters. From one county he had a circular they had issued to the Assistant Overseers, which said—

> "For the purposes of the election of Guardians it will be necessary that all the lists, including the ownership list, should correspond to the wards into which your parishes are divided. For that purpose you will have, in effect, to make out new ownership lists."

Now, there was no legal power to do that. Although he believed his right hon. Friend could promote an Order in Council to give that power, there was no power to do so at the present time, and some of the Assistant Overseers had already refused to carry out the orders of the county clerks. This had occurred in one of the most important counties of this country. He was not aware whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the complexity of this matter, but he would put the case of a township in the division of Manchester represented by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. In this case the parish was in 15 wards for the election of Guardians, two wards for the parish, and one polling district for the county. There the list of owners was a very large one; and there would have to be alphabetically one list, in the same order two lists, and in the same order 15 lists. These would have to be made up by someone in these different forms; they would have to be placed on the church doors, and revised in all those forms. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would see that in some cases the matter was one of extraordinary complexity and importance. He thought, under these circumstances, there would be a great deal of trouble to the Local Authorities with regard to bringing the electoral Register into force this year, and he did not think that merely taking the course of suspending the election until next year would improve matters unless they set back the dates, because the difficulties that arose now would arise at any other time unless more time were given which would not be given by merely postponing the election. He would therefore ask his right hon. Friend whether he could see his way either to call a Conference of the county clerks or else to issue an Order in Council dealing with the difficulties that had arisen?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, he had already thought of the matter, and with regard to the important point raised with respect to the legality of altering or revising the ownership lists, all he could say was that he would give it his most serious consideration. He did not, however, understand his right hon. Friend to object to the Second Reading of the Bill, but to admit that something was wanting because the Bill of last Session provided that these parochial electors were to come into existence in the present year. The appointed day was the 8th of November, or any later day the Local Government Board might determine which gave a discretion as to the exact day to the Local Government Board. His right hon. Friend opposite said he did not care for the understanding come to by the Leader of the Opposition and his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for India. He had in his hand a Memorandum signed by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition on that occasion, in which were these words—

> "It is desirable the Bill should come into operation as soon as possible."

The Memorandum then went on to speak of the additional expense that would be incurred, and with regard to that he (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) would point out that that expense would be thrown upon the Treasury. Under these circumstances, he hoped the House would allow them to take the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland) said, he scarcely thought the right hon. Gentleman fully appreciated the seriousness of the objection which his right hon. Friend had raised. It might be that the objections were raised to points of detail, but they formed such an aggregation that they went to the very centre of the principle of the Bill. He wished his right hon. Friend the Secretary for India had been in his place this afternoon that he might have had the pleasure of saying to him that upon this very point they had previously stated the main difficulty would be a difficulty as to the Register. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India said—"Register, I do not know what my right hon. Friend means." The present President of the Local Government Board, however, did know what it meant. They were very much disposed to help the Government out of a difficulty, but the right hon. Gentleman would not make the difficulty less by assuming it was small. He (Mr. Storey) would like to point out that it was so serious that it could not be got over except by a special Register for Local Bodies—that was, if the elections were to be secured within the time desired. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) considered there must be a conference of county clerks, and he (Mr. Storey) ventured to interpolate "it is too late for that." But as he had said, his disposition was to make the best of a bad job and get the new elections as soon as they could. He could not conceal from himself that under the circumstances of the Bill as it stood, and within the limits of the time allowed, it was impossible for the county clerks and Overseers in many parts of the country to produce a fitting Register in the time. That was a serious state of things. He believed that every Member in the House was desirous, now that the measure had been passed, to have the elections as soon as possible; but he was of opinion—he might be wrong—that unless they had special registration this year for local purposes, to overcome the difficulties which some of them had pointed out, they would have no election at all; and to put the thing off to another year would have no better result, because next year the elections would have to be on the Register made this year; therefore, if the Register could not be made in this year there would be no election at all. He was quite willing to discuss the matter in Committee with his right hon. Friend, but what his right hon. Friend should do was to permit the ordinary Register for Parliamentary purposes and borough and county purposes to go on. Considering the complexity of the lists that must exist where they had parish, district, and county lists, which were for different purposes than the Parliamentary lists, he thought of necessity the Government should make a special registration with a special Court for the purpose of fixing the lists.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, that as there was no intention of opposing the Second Reading of the Bill nothing could now be gained by discussing the details; the proper time for that would be when the Bill was sent to a Committee, when, if necessary, the Bill might be modified and the difficulties removed. Everyone, he understood, admitted there must be a Bill of some kind or other. The right hon. Gentleman opposite objected to certain portions of the Bill, and if those objections were well founded they would have to be dealt with; but as it was necessary there should be a Bill, he hoped the House would now allow the Second Reading to be taken.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) must say that he considered this was a most peculiar way of carrying on the business of the House. They all agreed there must be some sort of a Bill, but it was a most extraordinary thing for the Leader of the House to get up and say, when it was pointed out by one of his own followers that the Bill would not work, that it should be sent to a Committee for them to so alter and amend it as to make it a workable measure. Those who understood anything of registration were of opinion that the Bill as it stood would not answer the purposes required; it had been prepared in a hasty and haphazard way, and unless materially changed in Committee it would not carry out the views of the Government or the wishes of the House. He thought the Bill should be withdrawn and some proper Bill introduced. The

Government themselves acknowledged the Bill would not do what they wanted. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] At all events, all the followers of the Government who were acquainted with registration—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) and the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey)—said it would not work, and as, in his view, it would not carry out what the Government wished, he thought it an extraordinary arrangement to give the Bill a Second Reading simply to send it to a Committee; therefore, the proper plan would be not to pass the Second Reading, but to withdraw it, so that the Government could bring forth a Bill that would contain provisions that would carry out the intentions Parliament had in view when they passed the Bill of last Session. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself had said that if the Bill did not carry out what was required that the Committee would have to alter it; that was to say, the Committee was to frame a measure the Government were supposed to father. He objected to such a course, and if a Division were taken he would vote against it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure."—(*Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.*)

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** thought this was a matter in which a Select Committee would be preferable, on which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), and others might be placed. If the Bill were referred to a Grand Committee it would have to be re-discussed on the Report; therefore, no time would be saved.

**Sir W. HARCOURT** said, he found upon inquiry that there were a number of very heavy and important Bills before the Grand Committee; and as it was desirable the Bill should be dealt with as soon as possible, he agreed that it would be better to send it to a Select Committee.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

*Mr. Bartley*

## SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Supply,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

## CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (ESTIMATES), 1894-5.

### Class I.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £314.900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

**Mr. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.) said, there were one or two important questions he wished to ask upon this Vote, and in the first place he wished to point out what appeared to be a mistake in the printing. On page 34, in the second column, sub-section A, the item appeared at £350 instead of £2,350, as it appeared in the abstract. But the important points he wished to refer to were these. In sub-section F, Manchester, there were a number of new buildings referred to, and it was stated that out of the £2,000 voted last year, the expenditure up to last March was £1,000. He assumed the balance had been paid into the Exchequer, but perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell him that later. Then he came to the question of rents under sub-section I, and here he thought they ought to have some information as to the large expenditure upon rent. Year after year the country went on paying no less a sum than £21,700 for rents. This could not be desirable in the interests of economy, and some steps should be taken to reduce the amount. He also wished to draw attention to the items K and O. He did not wish to move any reduction unless the answer he obtained was unsatisfactory. These items K and O were in respect of Post Office buildings, and what he wished to draw attention to was the enormous differences between the original and revised Estimates for buildings. He found that the original Estimate for the works at the General Post Office was £170,000, while the revised Estimate was £190,000, and the building was not yet finished. The original estimate for the sorting office of the South-Western

District was £26,000 and the revised Estimate £59,800, or more than double the original Estimate. The original Estimate for the Mount Pleasant Parcel Post department was £48,600 and the revised Estimate £61,000; and so on with all these matters. At Fulham the original Estimate was £2,200, but the revised Estimate amounted to £4,100. For the enlargement of the North-Western District Office the original Estimate was £1,500. On the strength of that Estimate the House granted the money, but the revised Estimate amounted to £6,500, or more than four times the original Estimate. No doubt it was difficult not to exceed the original Estimate, but it was unreasonable that an Estimate for £1,500 should swell into one for £6,500. These were items that required careful consideration. He had referred to three or four, but he could go through a great number. In the case of the Cardiff new Post Office the original Estimate was £35,000, and the revised Estimate was £53,000; the original Estimate for the Leeds Post Office was £50,000, and the revised Estimate £76,000, or 50 per cent. more. The original Estimate for the Nottingham Head Office was £30,000, the revised Estimate was £40,600, and so on all through the items. He certainly thought they should have some explanation of why these enormous increases were allowed, and if he did not get a satisfactory answer he should have to move a reduction of the Vote.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, he objected to the Vote on principle, as he thought the separate Departments ought to be responsible for their own buildings; the Departments had no control in the matter, and therefore had no interest in cutting down the cost. He thought the Departments ought to be more responsible for the cost of their buildings than they had been. Why should the Revenue Department be treated differently to other Departments by having a separate Vote for buildings? These Votes did not deal with Scotland; they certainly did not deal with Ireland; therefore they were wholly illusory. The whole matter was dealt with in a very slipshod fashion, and there was no definite system of presenting the Votes.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Public buildings in Ireland come under Vote 14.

MR. HANBURY said, that was his point—namely, that the public buildings should be all put together. He should have liked to have seen the Irish buildings in each case assigned to the particular Irish Departments; but neither one thing nor the other was done at the present moment, and there was no regular system by which the Estimates were submitted to the House. But, accepting the principle upon which the Votes were submitted, look at the careless way in which that principle was carried out. This Vote purported to deal with Revenue Department buildings in Great Britain; but he saw that under other heads £269,000 was voted for exactly similar work. On what principle they paid for the buildings which were actually included in this Vote, and then paid £269,000 for precisely similar buildings in other Votes, he could not conceive. The matter was presented in such a careless fashion that it was impossible for the House of Commons to know what money it was voting for its public buildings in Great Britain. Take the appropriations in aid. They were all mixed up together, and, so far as he could see, the savings on the Post Office buildings might be transferred and used for the Inland Revenue Department. Surely that was wrong. Let the appropriations in aid connected with the Inland Revenue Department be asssigned to that Department and not used for the purposes of the Post Office. Purchases of sites for buildings for the Inland Revenue Department were dealt with in this Vote, but no such purchases in connection with the Post Office appeared. Why the purchases should be entered in the case of the one Department and not in the other he could not understand. He was not objecting to the items in the Vote, but to the promiscuous fashion in which these items were thrown at their heads without any system whatever. They had got under the heading of "furniture" the large item of £11,000. One would suppose that covered the whole amount of furniture required for the year, but that was not the case, for they would find another entry—"new buildings, new works, alterations, additions and purchases, including furniture for new buildings." Why the furniture for the old and new buildings should not be put under this sub-head he could not conceive, and he hoped that in future the Estimates would be presented in a more businesslike fashion, and not in a way in which no private firm would conduct its business. On the question of rents, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether it would not be a great saving to the Public Purse and be the means of distributing a good deal of money for wages if, instead of going on hiring these buildings—which were very costly, and many of them in a condition in which no Public Office ought to be, scattered, as they were—here, there, and everywhere—they were boldly to face the difficulty and capitalise this annual cost in having some good public buildings of which the country might be proud, and which would at the same time be much more useful for the transaction of public business. He fancied that public business suffered much from the way in which the buildings were separated and distributed all over London. He noticed that the cost of furniture for the Port of London was over £1,000, whereas for all the outports in England and Wales it was only half that sum. He should like to have some explanation of this apparent disproportion. A strange item appeared under sub-head (I.), "rents, insurance, tithe-rent charges, &c.," from which it appeared that a payment of £500 a year had presumably been going on for some time as an annuity in respect of the "old Excise Office, Broad Street, 8th George 3rd, chapter 32." Perhaps the First Commissioner of Works would be able to throw some light upon the subject. Again, he should like to press upon the right hon. Gentleman the necessity of seeing if he could not get his works carried out a little more in conformity with the Estimates. It was startling to see the differences between the original and the revised Estimate in nearly every item for post offices which was submitted to Parliament last year. Did the Department have one gentleman to go over the whole country and make estimates? If so, he was a gentleman whose estimates were strangely inaccurate, and his salary ought to be dealt with in some way when it was reached. If, on the other hand, there was a different person to prepare an estimate in every town, how was it the Government employed men who could not estimate properly? A new post office was very urgently needed in Preston, and he thought that a new building was to be erected at once, but he saw no estimate in the Vote for the work. He could not understand the reason why the provision of a building which was so much needed should be postponed in the case of Preston, whilst new buildings were provided for towns like Nottingham, where the necessities were not so great. Unless he received some satisfactory assurance that it was intended to proceed with the work of providing a new post office for Preston, he should have to move a reduction in some other items of such a sum as would provide for the building. The charge in respect of post offices for Scotland were out of all proportion to the population of Scotland as compared with the charges for England. For instance, the charge for maintenance and repairs was only £1,800 for Scotland as compared with £42,000 for England. Again, the cost of furniture for the Post Office in Scotland was only £200, as against £6,000 or £7,000 for England, and so on through the various items. The same state of affairs prevailed in regard to the Telegraph Department. The cost of maintenance and repairs for England and Wales was £14,000, and for Scotland only £600. Either the Scotch were more economical than the English, or a reduction had taken place in regard to Scotland which was not exhibited in the English Post and Telegraph Offices. He hoped they should get some satisfactory answer to the various points that had been raised, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would explain why this Vote was presented to Parliament in such an unbusinesslike fashion.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, the fact that this Vote showed an increase of 10 per cent. this year as compared with last year required explanation. He was glad to see hon. Gentlemen opposite taking an interest in this matter, but he regretted that they did not evince the same interest in the last Parliament when their own Party was in power, and when their intervention might have been productive of good results. The hon. Member for Preston said there was no system observed in the presentation of these Votes. That was a great mistake. There was an excellent system all through in connection with them, and that was a system whereby the Votes were made as difficult for them to be understood as it was possible to make them—a task in which all the Departments seemed to be so eminently successful that very few men could understand them. The only thing it was possible to understand was that these Departments always asked for more money than they required, but yet managed to spend it somehow or other. In regard to the charges for the Port of London there was an increase of £400 over last year in furniture and other matters, but as less work had been done he did not see why the amount should be increased. One of the transactions of the Customs Department of the Port of London was to turn the Port of London Sanitary Authority out of their offices, and to refuse to let them make use of them. They thus put the Port Sanitary Authority to considerable expense, which they were anxious to increase; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at his (Mr. Morton's) suggestion, prevented them doing as much mischief as they seemed desirous of doing. The hon. Member for Preston had raised a question with regard to rents and other expenses connected with the innumerable offices they had about London. This matter would come more appropriately on the next Vote, when he should urge that, instead of continuing to pay these rents, they should utilise some of the many vacant places that were now lying idle, to the great loss of the nation, for these buildings, the building of which would find employment for large numbers of working men. The hon. Member commented on the fact that in almost all cases, and in some to an extraordinary extent, the Estimates for buildings were always exceeded. In the South-Western District the original Estimate was £26,000, and the revised Estimate £59,800; or more than double, there being no explanation whatever of the increase. It might be right that the larger sum should be spent, but it was deceiving the House of Commons to say they only wanted £26,000, and then deliberately to go and arrange to spend nearly £60,000. If buildings and money were wanted they ought to be told as nearly as possible what the total cost would be, otherwise they had no control over the money, and would never know how much they were going to spend. In the case of Cardiff the original Estimate was £35,000, and the revised Estimate £53,000; in the case of Leeds the original Estimate was £50,000, and the revised Estimate £76,000; and in the case of Nottingham the original Estimate was £30,000, and the revised Estimate £40,000. In Scotland, where, as the hon. Member for Preston said, they were more economical than in England, they managed to do their work on smaller salaries, and the cost of buildings and expenses generally were less. Instead of increasing the Scotch Estimates, as some hon. Members desired, he should like to see the English and Irish Estimates reduced to the level of the Scotch, and then they should probably have the work done better than it was done now. The spending of such extraordinary amounts on extravagant and luxurious buildings was an invitation to these officers to do as little work as they possibly could, and why the Scottish officers did their work better was because they went for the purpose of doing work, and not to admire themselves, their offices, and their fine furniture. He desired to refer to the new sorting office at Balham. When that office was commenced some years ago the Department insisted upon building it outside the line of frontage. The Board of Works objected on the ground that it would interfere with and spoil the line of frontage, and eventually took the Department to the Police Court. Unfortunately, in the most shabby manner, when they got to the Police Court, the Post Office Authorities pleaded that the Queen could do as she liked, unrestrained by the law. The Magistrate was obliged to give way, and the building was stuck some 10 or 12 feet in front of all the other buildings. He desired to know if the building was going to be altered, and he would express the hope that in all matters of this kind in the future the First Commissioner of Works would see that the Government obeyed the law like other people, and were not allowed to disfigure a public street in the way they had done in this instance. He hoped also that the various charges, such as for furniture, fuel, light, and household articles, would not in future be distributed all over the accounts, but placed together so as to show in a simple and intelligent manner what was the total amount. The Financial Secretary was anxious to effect this change, and he trusted it would be accepted by the Government generally, and that they would overpower the Departments in their desire to wrap these things up as much as they could. Hon. Members should recollect they were not spending their own money but the money of the taxpayers of this country, who were already taxed and rated beyond the bearing point. They ought to endeavour to decrease rather than increase these charges.

*SIR J. BLUNDELL MAPLE (Camberwell, Dulwich) said, that in his opinion Post Office buildings, instead of being charged in an account like that which appeared in this Vote, ought to be charged to a capital account, whilst each year the outlay should appear in the Post Office Returns. For instance, leases were being continually disposed of. Why should they not have an account of the disposal of these leases? At present they could not tell what were the profits from the Post and Telegraph Department. No business would have its accounts muddled in that fashion. There should be a profit and loss account, and by a capital account the country should be able to see every year that there was something from the Department to go to the liquidation of the National Debt. He trusted that next year the manner of keeping accounts would be so amended that the House would be able to see at once the profit and loss of the Post Office Department.

*SIR J. LENG (Dundee) said, the hon. Member for Preston had pointed out that relatively the charges for post offices and other public buildings in Scotland were much smaller than in England. That was because the officials in Scotland were more careful in their work. He hoped the good example of the Scottish officials would be followed by officials further South, and that for the future the cost of buildings would be found to be more in accordance with the original Estimates. He believed that in all the Public Departments in Scotland the same state of things as in the Post Office would be found to exist, and he hoped that that fact, which was most creditable to Scottish prudence and carefulness, would be borne in mind by the authorities, because, unhappily, Scottish officials were paid on a much lower scale, though they did their work much better than officials further South. He believed the sum allowed for the new post office in Dundee was altogether inadequate for the purpose. Only £22,000 was allowed for the new post office in the third city of Scotland, while for a mere alteration in the Edinburgh Post Office £29,000 were allowed. He also desired to impress on the head of the Board of Works the desirability of giving local tradesmen the opportunity of competing for those local works. It was too much the custom to insert advertisements in the Metropolitan papers which did not come under the observation of local tradesmen. Very frequently work was tendered for without the knowledge of local tradesmen, and obtained by tradesmen living hundreds of miles away, who brought their own workmen to the locality to execute the works. In all large provincial towns there were tradesmen of great respectability and substance, able to do first-class work, and those men should in every case be given the opportunity of tendering for work in their localities.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said, he noticed a large sum of money in the Estimates for alterations in the Nottingham Post Office. That post office was described in the local guide book as "a handsome new building." If the building was new, why was this large sum of money to be expended on it?

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he noticed that while an ordinary locality like Lynn, which had not the honour of being represented by a distinguished Member of the Government, got nothing in the way of new buildings, Leeds and Nottingham, which were represented respectively by the First Commissioner of Works and the Postmaster General, were getting not only post offices, but Inland Revenue offices.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he was aware that those works were originated by the late Conservative Government.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he suspected that the late Government made an economical Estimate for the buildings, and that the usual course of the present Government was pursued in regard to them—the Estimates were greatly extended, so that until better advised he must hold the present Government responsible for the buildings. He did not say that the new buildings were unnecessary. Perhaps they were being put up for the accommodation of the new clerks which would be required to issue the new certificates under the new Death Duties; but he would tell the Government that to provide for the extra work they would want multitudes of new clerks and acres of new buildings. He thought the manner in which the cost of new buildings invariably exceeded the original Estimates was perfectly scandalous. In some cases the excess was between £20,000 and £30,000. In fact, the Post Office did its business in such a loose way that if it had not a monopoly, and were subject to the stress of competition, it would have been in the hands of the Official Receiver long ago. He also thought the £300,000 asked for the new Post Office buildings was altogether too large. The business of the Department could be done in smaller buildings, and would be done in smaller buildings if it were a private firm under the stress of competition.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said, the hon. Member for Lynn Regis had brought some serious charges against the Department in connection with the money spent on the buildings in Leeds and Nottingham. He would point out that Leeds and Nottingham were towns of considerable importance, and he should take some exception to the comparison instituted by the hon. Member between them and Lynn. However, he was glad to say that there was no foundation for the hon. Gentleman's suspicions, because, with regard to Leeds, the expenditure was very properly sanctioned by the Treasury under the late Government at a time probably when his right hon. Friend the Member for North Leeds was Secretary to the Treasury; and the expenditure at Nottingham was also sanctioned by the Treasury under the late Government, despite the fact that the present Postmaster General represented a division of the town.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: What is the date?

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, the date added nothing material to the case. The fact was, that the expenditure was sanctioned by the late Government. The hon. Member for Lynn Regis also complained of the large amount asked for this year for Post Office buildings. It was difficult to please everybody. Last year the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ormskirk Division made a charge against his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board of a precisely opposite character; and accused the Government of starving the Post Office. The hon. Member for Lynn now denounced the Government for extravagance. He could say that all the Estimates had been gone into this year with special closeness, and no more money was asked for than was absolutely necessary for the Post Office Service. His hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough said it seemed as if the Government intentionally surrounded this Vote with difficulties in order to prevent hon. Members from understanding it. If that were true, he (Mr. H. Gladstone) was to be pitied, because he had nothing to do with the original framing of the Estimates, and he had to try to master the difficulties surrounding them as best he could. However, he would see whether the difficulties could in any way be removed. He believed his hon. Friend the Member for Dundee was misinformed when he said that local tradesmen did not get full opportunities of tendering for local works. It was the invariable practice of the Board of Works to insert advertisements in the local papers, though advertisements were also placed elsewhere, because sometimes there was no one in the locality to tender for the work. The hon. Member for Islington pointed out what seemed to be a misprint. He could not at the moment give the hon. Member an explanation, but he would do so at another time. Several hon. Members drew attention to the heavy rents paid for additional departmental offices; and he agreed with them that the rents were heavy. It was said that the Government ought, in the interest of economy, to concentrate those offices, and give, by additional building, employment to those out of work. He had great sympathy with that view; but it was a matter that would require looking into, and he would consult with the Treasury on it. He confessed there was considerable weight in the complaints made by hon. Members as to the differences between the original Estimates for buildings and the revised Estimates. He believed the explanation was that the original Estimates were somewhat hurriedly put forward in a rough shape when the Treasury sanction for the new buildings was asked for. They were rough estimates made before it was possible ;to draw plans or receive tenders. It might be that the difference between the Estimates was more marked in the present than in past years, because, as hon. Members knew, the cost of material and the cost of labour had very considerably increased recently. If the Estimates could be framed in a more business-like fashion he would be very glad; and if hon. Members opposite gave him the opportunity, by leaving him in Office during the next two or three years, he would undertake to say that he would make the Votes clearer and more business-like by that time. The hon. Member for Preston seemed to think that it was incongruous that the Office of Works should be responsible for expenditure on Inland Revenue and Post Office buildings. As a matter of fact, the Office of Works was responsible for the buildings of all the civil Government Departments, except in Ireland. As to the alleged impolicy of the practice, he did not see what was to be gained by transferring the responsibility from the Office of Works to the various Departments concerned. On the contrary, by concentrating the work in one office and employing experienced officials there was a probability of getting it done cheaper and better. However, it was a matter for argument; but whether right or wrong the present system represented the wisdom of many Governments for many years. The hon. Member for Preston had spoken of treating furniture as an asset, but the practice was to use and to repair the furniture until it was worthless for anything except firewood. With regard to the question as to the post office at Preston, he (Mr. H. Gladstone) was afraid he could not give the hon. Member much satisfaction. Delays and difficulties had occurred in connection with the negotiations for the site, and he was not in a position to say at present how the matter stood, or when the work was likely to be taken up. He would inquire into the question of the Balham Post Office referred to by the hon. Member for Peterborough. As to the question referred to by the hon. Member for Dulwich, the matter had come up last year, and the case had been promised favourable consideration by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He himself (Mr. H. Gladstone) had had some communication with the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General on the subject. There were objections to doing anything this year which he need not go into just now, but he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the matter would be looked closely into when the Estimates for another year came on.

Mr. HANBURY said, he had inquired whether these Estimates were prepared by one set of persons in the Central Office or by officials in the different towns.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, they were prepared by the Surveyors at the Central Office. Each had his own district.

Sir J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, he did not think they should pass the Estimate until they had received an assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury that in framing the Estimates in future the strictures passed by the hon. Member for Preston on the present system would be duly considered. He did not agree with the hon. Member that it would be better if the different Departments of the Government were to build their own offices. He believed that if they did it would be an extremely expensive business, but he did agree with his hon. Friend that every Department of the Government ought to be treated alike in the Estimates. If the system which was carried out by the Treasury and the Office of Works was good in one case it ought to be applied impartially and rigidly to every Public Department. But from the Estimates it was apparent that the Post Office was unduly favoured in comparison with other Departments of the State. Take, for instance, the matter of sites. In all other Departments of the State the payment for sites was made by the Office of Works under the control of the Treasury, but he believed he was right in saying that the

Post Office was allowed to find its own sites. If economy was secured by entrusting the purchase of sites to the Board of Works in all other Departments, why on earth should not that system prevail in connection with the Post Office? The Treasury should assure the House that this matter would be looked into, and that all Departments of the State would have the advantage of the control of the Office of Works in these matters. In all other Departments, again, if buildings had to be hired the arrangements were made by the Office of Works, the rents being fixed by that Office; but in the case of the Post Office they hired their own buildings, and the Estimate was brought forward in a separate form. What he asked the Secretary to the Treasury to do was to assure the Committee that he would look into this matter and see that the same control was exercised and the same economy ensured in regard to building works and sites in the Post Office as was secured through the instrumentality of the Office of Works in every other Department.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) said, that as to the method adopted in connection with these matters by the Post Office and the other Departments, the arrangement was made in 1868-9. He was told that as a result great economy had been secured from the transfer of control over buildings to the Office of Works, and the work since carried out by that Department had been much less expensive than formerly. He would promise to make careful inquiry into the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir J. Gorst) as to the Post Office being differently dealt with to other Departments. He could only think that the reason why the Post Office had been placed in a different position from that of other Departments was because the Post Office was supposed to know better than the Office of Works what would be the best sites for the various post offices throughout the country; and, no doubt, there was considerable force in such a reason. It was hardly possible for the Office of Works to know the best sites for post offices; therefore, there might be strong grounds for leaving the selection of sites with the Post Office. With regard to the erection and repair of buildings, he did not see why the Post Office should not be on the same footing as other Departments. He would promise that the point raised should receive attention in order to see whether a better plan could not be devised of dealing with the large expenditure on the part of the Post Office. In regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Peterborough, he ventured to think that the Estimates for this year with regard to Post Office buildings were much clearer and more simple than they were last year. They had been altered considerably. He was anxious to do all he could to simplify the form of the Estimates, and if possible to improve them. If any suggestion was made at any time for furthering this object he was always ready to go into it and see if it was possible to improve the system. The reason items for Post Office buildings appeared under two Votes was that under the present system the Post Office purchased the sites. If they purchased a site with a building upon it which they meant to appropriate and use as a post office, then it came under their own Vote; but if they purchased a site without buildings on it, the Office of Works would deal with the buildings.

SIR J. GORST said, he did not raise the slightest objection to the Post Office selecting their own sites for buildings they intended to erect or selecting their own offices. All he contended for was that, when they made a selection, they should employ the Office of Works. It had been proved by experience that the Office of Works could perform this service at a cheaper rate than the Post Office could perform it for itself.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, that as one who had had as much to do with the purchase of sites for public offices as anyone in the House, he desired to say a few words on this question. He wished to acknowledge the courteous and satisfactory manner in which the Secretary to the Treasury always answered points raised on that (the Opposition) side of the House. At the same time, he felt bound to take exception to the great variations he found to exist between the amounts of the original Estimates for some of the works included within the present Vote and the sums now asked for. In the case of

Item 8 the original amount was £26,000, but the Vote submitted was £59,000, or a variation of more than 100 per cent. It was explained that there had been a great increase in the cost of material and labour since the original Estimates were prepared.

*Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, he had explained that the original scheme in the case in question had been found to be totally inadequate. A new one had to be adopted.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, that if that were the case, he would let the item pass. He had not heard any explanation as to the variation in Item 9.

*Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, he had already given a particular explanation in the case of Items 8 and 9, and a general explanation—namely, that the original Estimates were necessarily rough.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, it would have been well if the Minister had come down to the House fortified with a detailed explanation on these points, because he must have known that from the Opposition side of the House attention would be given to these grave variations. In Item 23 there was a variation from £35,000 to £53,000, or more than 50 per cent. In Item 31 there was an increase from £30,000 to £46,000, and in Item 42 there was an increase from £23,000 to £30,000. These were large increases, and they were very unsatisfactory. To bring the matter to a somewhat more definite issue, he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £313,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir R. Temple.*)

Mr. HANBURY said, he hoped his hon. Friend would proceed to a Division, because the admission made by the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works was a very serious one, and the House ought to protest against having these "rough" Estimates submitted to it—Estimates drawn up in a hurry, which, as they saw in the result, bore no relation whatever to the actual cost. He did not think that was a proper way for the Department to treat the House of Commons. They had a right to have placed before them Estimates that were correctly drawn, and which could be carried out, and not Estimates which were 50 and 100 per cent. below the mark. He did not wish unnecessarily to divide the House, but he and his friends were forced to divide against this Vote as a protest against the existing state of things. He had no doubt there was a great deal to be said for the system of the Board of Works being responsible for the buildings of this Department, but there was much to be said on the other side, particularly when they were told that Estimates were submitted "in the rough." There was a tendency in this way for more extravagant expenditure to be incurred than would be the case if each Department was responsible for its own buildings. When Estimates were prepared by the Board of Works they were not based on the actual requirements of the Departments. In the case of the buildings at South Kensington, the Estimates were not based on the requirements of the Department, and the result was that alterations had to be made as the work progressed. In this way a great deal of money was wasted. The same thing happened in connection with the new Admiralty buildings. When the buildings had proceeded some distance the Admiralty officials went to the Board of Works and said, "We want all this altered. We must have larger rooms, and you will have to throw two rooms into one." The Departments interested were not sufficiently consulted, and this resulted in the end in great loss to the Public Purse.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, he wished to offer a criticism on the building policy not only of the Post Office Department, but of the Chief Commissioner of Works. He protested against their claiming exemption from the ordinary architectural rule, which all Local Authorities and private builders were bound by. The hon. Member for Peterborough had called attention to a departure from the proper line of frontage by the Government surveyors at Balham, and the Post Office Authorities were about to put up a building in his (Mr. Burns's) own district which, if the precedent set in the case for a recent Police Court built there were followed, would be an architectural nuisance to the whole neighbourhood. An encroachment of eight feet on the frontage would be made. These encroachments encouraged local shop-keepers to throw forward their premises, and so to increase the value of their property, and prevent the Local Authorities from making the streets as wide, convenient, and handsome as they should be. It seemed to him that all buildings, Government and otherwise, should conform to the ordinary rules and be constructed under the supervision of the local surveyors. He failed to see why the Office of Works should be a law unto itself on this matter. Looking over the Estimates for post office buildings he could not help being struck by the fact that one had only to be a provincial Member of Parliament to get £20,000 or £30,000 or £40,000 spent on a post office in a particular district. As for poor London, it suffered to an extent that was deplorable. It had only £700 or £800 spent on its post offices—at most £2,000 or £3,000. In Islington, with a population of 350,000, they found the post office at a frowsy, stuffy corner shop, whereas they found provincial towns with a sixth or seventh of that population having £50,000 or £60,000 spent on their post offices. As a Metropolitan Member he was sick and tired of seeing a large population served by a post office at a cheesemonger's shop or an oil merchant's. In his own neighbourhood they were using tin tabernacles which the Sanitary Authorities ought to condemn. He appealed to the Postmaster General and the First Commissioner of Works to see that justice was done to London, which at present was treated in this matter of post offices worse than a fourth-rate provincial town.

MR. D. PLUNKET (Dublin University) said, he wished to say a few words on the great apparent increase which appeared on the face of these Estimates over the amount contemplated when the original Estimate was framed. He thought that the Committee might easily be under some misapprehension as to the gravity of the criticisms which had been offered. In the first place, it must be remembered that, in regard to many of the post offices and other buildings of which they had been speaking, the original Estimates were framed some time ago—some as far back as 1884, and a great many five or six years ago. If they remembered the great increase which had taken place of late in the price of labour and materials—an increase which it would not be an exaggeration to say had amounted to 20 per cent. within the past five or six years—they would not be surprised that the original Estimates had been exceeded. He did not think that any system which could be invented by the wit of man would enable them to construct buildings which would carry out the wishes of the Departments and at the same time correspond exactly with the original Estimates. In the case before the Committee it was a doubly difficult matter to achieve. Provincial towns were anxious to have improved post offices; their Members pressed the Government to set the buildings on foot at once, and very often—as the hon. Member for Battersea had pointed out—if the friends of those Members happened to be in power, the demands were acceded to and Estimates were immediately called for. Well, it was necessary that the sanction of Parliament should be obtained as soon as possible if the thing was going to be done, and consequently that an Estimate of some kind should be presented. As the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had said, from the necessities of the case the Estimate prepared must be a rough one. No one who had had any experience of private buildings would suppose for a moment that Estimates hurriedly framed could be carried out without adding to the original scheme. Increases in the case of Post Office Estimates were not so easily obtained, because even when the Post Office had satisfied the Office of Works that it was necessary that such and such changes should be made all the papers had to go before the Treasury, and having had experience in these matters he could assure the House that the Treasury were not very soft-hearted people to deal with in the matter of increasing original Estimates. He did not believe that the increases in question were in any degree to be attributed to the infirmity of judgment of those who originally framed the Estimates. He was bound to say that there could not be found in England or in any other country more skilled, experienced, or prudent men than the surveyors and architects who had to undertake and carry out this difficult matter. The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had both promised that they would look into the question of transferring the business of acquiring sites for post offices from the General Post Office Authorities to the Office of Works. Speaking from his own experience of the matter, he must say that his own judgment would be entirely in favour of some such change, for undoubtedly the saving of expense had been very considerable in the case of the Customs and Excise buildings since they were transferred from the authority of the several Departments to the responsibility of the Office of Works. And it stood to reason that it should be so. If a Department employed its own surveyor or architect, he would be more likely to fall in with the views of his principals or the heads of the Department who might desire additions and alterations to be made to his plans than would a surveyor or architect lodged in a different office. When building operations were conducted by the Office of Works a double protection was afforded to the taxpayers—first, by the interference of the Office of Works with the view to economy; and, secondly, by the control of the Treasury with the same view. Reference had been made to the Committee which sat in 1877, and recommended that the Customs and Inland Revenue Offices should be transferred, as far as buildings were concerned, to the Office of Works. In confirmation of the views which were presented by that Committee, he might mention that another Committee, he believed under the presidency of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), sat in 1887, and the Permanent Secretary of the Office of Works, who was as excellent an official as there was in the Service, was able by his evidence to satisfy them that the recommendations of the former Committee had been entirely carried out, and to prove that there had been a very considerable reduction in the cost of buildings since the change had taken place. He (Mr. Plunket) would, therefore, venture to support the view put forward by some hon. Members in the direction of, if possible, further putting the principle in force and transferring to the Office of Works building operations now performed by the great Offices of the State.

MR. W. WHITELAW (Perth) inquired whether the fact that no Vote appeared in the Estimates with regard to the post office of a particular town would prevent buildings being carried out in connection with the Post Office during the present year?

*MR. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg) said, he thought that the criticisms of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) were hardly fair in regard to the question of the roughness of the Estimates. He had not attacked the completed Estimates at all. It was desirable that the Committee should realise that, while only 20 of the Estimates before the Committee had been increased, 38 were unaltered, and one had actually been decreased. That said a great deal for the care with which the Estimates had been originally framed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) inquired whether attention was being directed to the subject on which he put a question the other day concerning the sanitary arrangements of the additional buildings now being constructed for the Post Office in London?

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that, while a large number of new works or alterations were proposed in connection with the Post Office during the present financial year, he had looked in vain for alterations or additions to the post office in the town of Sleaford. The claims of Sleaford had been pressed upon the attention of the Postmaster General more than once, and he trusted that the First Commissioner of Works would be able to give him some assurance on the subject.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he did not think that the way in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. Gladstone) had vindicated the Estimates would commend itself entirely to the House. The point to which objection was taken was the difference between the two columns of figures, one representing the original and the other a revised Estimate. In one instance there was a difference of 50 per cent. between the two sets of figures. In the case of private buildings the very greatest exception would be taken to such differences by any prudent business man. He wished to point out that there was a great difference between the kind of buildings erected for post offices in the provinces and those that were supposed to be sufficient in London. In many provincial towns the expenditure upon post offices had been almost superfluous, whilst in London it was entirely inadequate. He believed that what had been said about the insanitary condition of many of the post offices was applicable to many cases in London. In his district the post office was quite inadequate as compared with those of any ordinary provincial town, although the district had some 400,000 inhabitants, and he believed the post office served a larger area than Islington itself.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: I am not aware that a distinction has been made by the Office of Works between London and provincial districts, and certainly, as far as I am concerned, I am prepared to treat all districts with the strictest impartiality. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) asked me a question about Sleaford. I am sorry to say Sleaford is not included in the Estimates for this year, and I cannot give him any accurate information about it. I will, however, inquire into the question in a very sympathetic spirit, and will communicate the result to him. I can assure my hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) that I have not at all lost sight of the matter to which he has alluded, and it is at this moment under consideration. There is plenty of time to deal with the question, however, because the post office in question will not be occupied for several months to come. With regard to the point raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Battersea (Mr. Burns), concerning the Post Office and the Local Authorities, I fully agree with the general principle laid down by my hon. Friend. I will look into the matter and see what can be done, but I think I must guard myself by saying that power may possibly have to be reserved to the Department in certain cases. I hope the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Temple) will not put the Committee to the trouble of a Division after the somewhat full discussion we have had upon the question of the differences between the original and the revised Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. D. Plunket) has explained with extreme lucidity the difficulties that have to be got over; and I cannot say at the present time whether we could make any better arrangement. Some rough original Estimates must be made. If the hon. Baronet insists upon having two columns which should better harmonise with one another, I do not quite see at what point the earlier Estimates could be made. When proposals for post offices are first made the cost is, of course, almost invariably stated to be less than it subsequently turns out to be. When proposals are first made locally, difficulties are under-estimated or not foreseen, whilst, as the plans have not been fully gone into, the actual expenditure cannot be accurately known. It is absolutely necessary to have a rough original Estimate when bringing the scheme before the Treasury in the first instance, and the question we have to decide is whether, as a standard comparison with the ultimate cost, you will put into your first column this rough original Estimate, or whether you will have a more finished Estimate based on accurate examination of the details of the work. I can assure the hon. Baronet that I will go into the matter as carefully as I can, with the view of making a better arrangement if possible.

MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, he had several times heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) contrast the spirit in which Parliament approached its task of discussing the Estimates now with that in which it approached it in former times. He (Mr. Lowther) had been much struck during the present Debate by the degree of influence which had been brought to bear on the Government in the direction not of economy, but of increased expenditure in all parts of the country. Metropolitan Members had been urging that the Post Office expenditure in London ought to be upon as great a scale relatively as that in other parts of the country. He must point out to those Members, however, that their object had been already more than fully attained, because something like half of the whole of the Estimates for Post Office buildings in England and Wales related to the Metropolis. He must draw the attention of the Committee to what he might call the log-rolling system—using the term in its most harmless sense—which appeared to prevail. When an hon. Member complained that a larger expenditure had been incurred at Sheffield and Nottingham, it was not, however, the larger expenditure at Sheffield or Nottingham that aroused his virtuous indignation, but the fact that a corresponding outlay had not been made at King's Lynn or Preston, or some other place. This was what, in an inoffensive sense, might be termed log-rolling of the most barefaced character. The Civil Service expenditure was the growing evil of the present day. The increase which had taken place in the Civil Service Estimates within his recollection as compared with the other Estimates was gigantic. It was said by the Government that it was impossible to frame rough Estimates in any way approximately to the ultimate cost of the undertakings. He thought that such a statement ought to make the Committee extremely cautious how in the future it accepted rough Estimates. The Committee was treated in a manner in which the Representatives of the people should not be treated if they were to exercise any control over national expenditure. When the revised Estimates were produced, Members who objected to sanctioning a large increase over the original Estimates were told that it was too late for them to do so; that the ship could not be spoiled for a ha'porth of tar, and that unless the buildings were carried out on the same scale as had been originally proposed a great deal of expenditure would have to be incurred in modifying the Estimates. This was a point which appeared to be deserving of the consideration of the Committee, and he hoped that, instead of urging the Government on to increased expenditure, hon. Members would rather endeavour to induce them to diminish these bloated Civil Service Estimates.

**Mr. COHEN** (Islington, E.) said, that when his right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Lowther) contended that half the Post Office expenditure in the current year was to go to the Metropolis he did not appear to be aware that no less than £185,000 was to go to the General Post Office besides other sums of £28,800 and £48,000. Surely it could not be held that the expenditure which was incurred in the service of the United Kingdom generally could be in any way assigned to London by way of arriving at a just comparison between London Post Office expenditure and Post Office expenditure, say, in Leeds. He (Mr. Cohen) should certainly support his hon. Friend (Sir R. Temple) if he went to a Division, because he did not think the First Commissioner of Works had given an explanation which was calculated to satisfy the Committee upon the question at issue.

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** said, in explanation, that the hon. Member would find he had not been in the least disingenuous. If the hon. Member would look at the sums required, he would see that the money wanted was for other parts of London, and not for the General Post Office.

**Sir R. TEMPLE** said, with regard to the statement that the instances he had mentioned were very few in comparison with the total number, he had refrained out of mercy from alluding to other cases. For instance, for the post office at Leeds the Estimate had risen from £50,000 to £75,000, for Newmarket from £1,800 to £2,600, and for Slough from £2,400 to £3,600. Those were all increases of 50 per cent. or more. Again, the hon. and learned Member had stated that the first Estimate was only a rough one; but it was the original Estimate, and upon it the House began to vote the money. The speech of the right hon. Member for the University of Durham was, like everything which fell from him, very interesting and very sympathetic, but it evidenced that union of mind which always seemed to subsist between the two Front Benches. The 20 per cent. for wages would not represent the increase; and the matter simply amounted to this: that in this country it was impossible to frame perfectly accurate Estimates with regard to the cost of buildings. He thought a Division ought to be taken upon the question of principle whether the House of Commons was to vote money upon a rough-and-ready reckoning of cost, or upon properly framed Estimates.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 55; Noes 115.—(Division List, No. 46.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) rose to a point of Order. Unless he had happened to walk into the House at the time, he should not have known that a Division had been called, the Division bells not having been rung either in the Library or in the offices of the House.

The CHAIRMAN said, he understood that was the case, but a message had been sent to the person in charge, and they would be put in order.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) desired to repeat a question he had put on a former occasion in reference to the Post Office Votes upon a point on which he had received a number of letters. Some old buildings known as Coldbath Fields Prison had been fitted up as a money order office, and many of the persons who had to work there had suffered from illness, and even cases of death had resulted. Certainly the number of persons who had been made ill in that particular department was very large. This was a serious matter. It was represented that the place—originally a prison—had only been fitted up temporarily as a branch of the Post Office, but the fact was that a considerable number of clerks employed there had been invalided. He put the question at the solicitation of the clerks in the office, who bitterly complained of the insanitary arrangements of the place. He believed that on the former occasion the right hon. Gentleman promised that the necessary alterations should be made, and he only rose now to renew his previous question, and to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether proper precautions had been taken to protect the health of the clerks employed in the department?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.) said, a thorough investigation had been made into the ventilation of the offices in question. As communications had been received with regard to its condition, a small Commission, consisting of Lord Playfair and Dr. Corfield, had been appointed to inquire into the matter. They wanted to ascertain the condition of the atmosphere at different times of the year. It was probable that he would receive the Report in the course of a few days.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, that was hardly a satisfactory reply—that the clerks were to continue being poisoned while scientific investigations were made. The right hon. Gentleman was aware that £95,000 had been allocated to the improvement of the sanitary arrangements of the departments, and the Committee would have to deal with it in the next Vote. In the circumstances, it was absolutely inexcusable to leave men to be poisoned in offices of this kind while doing their work. He remembered a very painful incident of the kind in his own former experience at the Legacy Duty Department. That was a serious case, involving the death of a meritorious clerk, and he quoted it to show the right hon. Gentleman what he was exposing these men to. The man he spoke of had been placed in an insanitary position in Somerset House, where his health suffered very much, and though he was obliged to leave the Service the Commissioners refused to grant him any compensation. Ultimately, however, in consequence of a series of "disturbances," to put it mildly, the unfortunate man was granted £1,000, but he did not live to enjoy it, for he had, in fact, died a month before, undoubtedly from having been left in that unsanitary place. As far as appeared, the right hon. Gentleman was following exactly the same course with regard to his own clerks, leaving them to be poisoned in a room which was not in a sanitary condition. It was unnecessary to await the result of a scientific investigation. One's nose was generally sufficient to tell whether a place was in a sanitary state or not, and by that test not only was it plain inside the building that this old prison was not in a sanitary condition, but it was plain to the whole neighbourhood.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the percentage of disease in this particular building at the beginning of the year was very heavy indeed, and if it should continue at anything like the same rate the Post Office authorities would simply be playing with the lives of these unfortunate men to keep them at work in such a place. He should be obliged to divide the Committee unless he received a distinct assurance from the rigth hon. Gentleman in this matter, that the clerks were not now suffering to anything like the same extent as at the beginning of the year. Looking at the acknowledged insanitary state of the building, they were likely to suffer more severely in the hot than in colder weather. In the absence of that assurance, he should move a reduction of £1,000 on the Vote.

Mr. A. C. MORTON suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should ask the Local Sanitary Authorities to report upon these buildings. At present, as far as he could tell, no notice had been taken of them. He believed they had no power to compel what was necessary to be done, but he did not think the Department ought to refuse to do what was considered necessary. The services of qualified Inspectors could be obtained from a very useful body in London at no great expense, and in that way the necessary Report could be procured on which the proper authorities might act. The right hon. Gentleman should remember how difficult subsequent alterations were sometimes. The Board schools in London had been built on a certain system, and it had been found necessary in some places to reconstruct the sanitary arrangements at an immense expense. Here was something of the same kind, and this old building seemed to be in its present state simply because the Department had not consulted the Local Sanitary Authorities. In such a case where other people were concerned that action would have been taken with the assistance of a police Magistrate. He suggested as a matter of business that the Department should, in this instance, obtain the assistance of the Local Sanitary Authorities, as was done in other cases throughout the Kingdom.

Mr. A. MORLEY said, in reference to the remark of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, that the clerks were being poisoned, there was nothing of the kind. The only objection that had been raised to the condition of these buildings related to the heating and ventilation.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, that was exactly what poisoned the men.

Mr. A. MORLEY said, as he had already stated, the matter was being fully inquired into by the Commission which had been appointed to investigate, and he might assure hon. Members that whatever was necessary would be done.

Mr. HANBURY said, the right hon. Gentleman's answer had, in fact, made out a very strong case, and showed that the complaints had been made with good reason of the insanitary condition of these buildings. The place was in a thoroughly insanitary state. The right hon. Gentleman now told them that the Commission which had been looked to so much for the protection of the health of the people employed by the Department was merely dealing with the heating and ventilation of the building. That was most unsatisfactory, and was not dealing with the exigencies of the case. What was requisite in the matter was not being done, and in view of the unsatisfactory answer which had been given he should move to reduce the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £314,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, the Committee ought to know something more about this matter. Certainly it appeared that these clerks were carrying on their work in danger of being suffocated by the defective ventilation. The Postmaster General had said it was only a matter of ventilation and fresh air. Exactly; and surely something should be done to put a stop to the present state of affairs. There was no question at all of the insanitary condition of these buildings, and such a state of things was not creditable. It seemed unreasonable that Government buildings should be exempted from the requirements demanded in other cases. He had had a good deal to do with public Offices, and knew perfectly well that one of the difficulties with regard to them was their being kept in a proper state of sanitary repair. If any ordinary private employer were to put up a great block of buildings and ignore all obviously necessary sanitary rules the authorities would be down on him at once. Restrictions were often very troublesome, but that was no reason why these buildings should be kept in a bad state to the danger of the health of the clerks. The Postmaster General had quite given his case away, and it was the duty of the Committee to obtain from him some better assurance that the men would not be suffocated.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, he had no desire to question the qualifications of the gentleman appointed by the Postmaster General to conduct this special inquiry. It seemed to him, however, that the right hon. Gentleman was asking from Lord Playfair and Dr. Corfield more than he ought to do, and the object he had in view would be much better attained if he would agree that post offices in all parts of the country should be open to the inspection of the Local Sanitary Authorities. He maintained that the County Council and the Vestry between them ought to inspect not only private houses, but such buildings as those belonging to the Salvation Army and the Post Office to see that their ventilation and structural conditions were such as to satisfy the requirements of sanitary science. He felt certain that the investigation of Lord Playfair and Dr. Corfield would not be as searching and practically beneficial to the postmen as would an inquiry conducted by the surveyors and medical officers of the Vestries. In his own district there was a corrugated iron post office about which the postmen complained very bitterly. One of the men had come to him to complain of the insanitary condition of the place and to urge the necessity of some healthy rest being provided for the men when off duty. Members of Parliament ought not to be petitioned as they were at present for subscriptions for postmen's rests and auxiliary institutes. These institutions should be provided by the Post Office Authorities, and no doubt they would be if the duty of inspecting the post office buildings were entrusted to the proper Local Authorities.

MR. A. MORLEY said, he thought this suggestion well worthy of consideration, and he would promise to confer with the First Commissioner of Works on the subject. With regard to the provision of institutes and postmen's rests, the subject did not arise on this Vote.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, he had been obliged to drag the subject in on this Vote. The complaint was not that there was no place for the postmen to rest in—for they could rest in the existing insanitary buildings in which the work of the post office was performed—but that there was no separate room.

MR. A. MORLEY said, that there was sufficient accommodation provided for the men who were off duty in the permanent offices, but he gathered that the hon. Gentleman referred to rests in buildings of a temporary character.

MR. JOHN BURNS: There are scores of these iron buildings all over London.

MR. A. MORLEY said, he could assure the hon. Member for Preston that the Commissioners named had full power to investigate the whole circumstances. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member would not put the Committee to the trouble of a Division. The Report of the Commissioners would be prepared in a few days, and he would undertake that every consideration should be given to the suggestions which had been made to-day.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, he endorsed what had been said by the hon. Member for Battersea. He had long thought it would be desirable for the Local Sanitary Authorities in the Metropolis to have the inspection of all buildings, whether they belonged to the Government or not.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 37; Noes 100.—(Division List, No. 47.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £187,975, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University) said, he wanted to call attention to this matter, but not for the purpose of making any objection. What he desired that the Committee should notice was the hiring of rooms by the Factory Department of the Home Office. This was the first time that a room had been hired by the Office of Works for the purposes of the administration of the Factory Acts, and he should be glad to be told what the room was for, and whether there was any intention to establish such rooms in different parts of the country. He did not say that this was not a wise expenditure in the interests of the Public Service, but there was the danger that such expenditure might become excessive. He wanted to know whether it was not intended to establish similar rooms or offices generally, so that there might be an easier communication with the Factory Inspector than could at present take place through the medium of the Home Office? It was only by a multiplication of offices of this kind all over the Kingdom that the Government could hope successfully to deal with the evil of sweating.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he noticed in the Estimate a large amount for the lighting of London University. It appeared to him that they were always spending money on the London University, and he had asked the Government more than once whether they ought not to reduce the fees, which were very large. They had not been able to get the Minister for Education to do anything, and he should like to see whether the First Commissioner of Works could do anything in the way of economy. Then he wanted to draw attention to the question of the Orange Street Waterworks, which, as he understood, supplied the water to the fountain in Trafalgar Square. Complaints were constantly made as to the dirty state of the water. Of course, he knew that the people living about the square did not want to make any serious complaints, because if they did so, being tenants under the Government, they might have their rents raised. It was a fact, however, that the water was used over and over again, and that in warm weather the fountain was in an insanitary condition. He did not see why the Local Sanitary Authority should not have authority over a matter of this kind, and he should urge that every Department, not only the General Post Office, should consider the advisability of making use of the Local Authority for sanitary purposes. Another matter which he had to point out was, that in reference to Post Office buildings there was almost always an increase upon the original Estimate. The buildings in which the offices of the Board of Trade were situated would be a disgrace to the smallest country in Europe. He wished to know why, when the Government had vacant sites on their hands, they should not get rid of the various tumble-down buildings now used by the Board of Trade, and put up good and useful buildings for the Public Service? He was indebted to *The Daily Chronicle* for some information on the subject of Government buildings. That paper very properly said that—

> "With the exception of the Foreign Office, and the Home, Colonial, and Indian Offices, there is not probably a single Department in Whitehall the whole of whose staff is housed under one roof. The sanitary condition of the War Office in Pall Mall has long been a scandal."

This was one of the offices for which rent was paid. The article proceeded—

> "The strange congeries of buildings occupied by the Board of Trade are not any better. The main office of the Board of Trade in Whitehall Gardens is a strange and motley group of buildings with long and dark passages, and small and inconvenient rooms, but various branches of the Department are scattered over Whitehall and Parliament Street."

He (Mr. Morton) had to a large extent gone over the buildings, and he found this description to be correct. Parliament did not mind spending any amount of money on the Army and Navy and the Royal Family and Foreign Royal Families, but it never seemed to be able to do anything properly for the trade of the country. He knew that gentlemen opposite were rather ashamed of being called shopkeepers, but as a matter of fact everybody in the country depended upon the shopkeepers and the workers. This being so, it was surely desirable to have respectable offices for the Department which dealt with trade. He did not advocate any unnecessary expenditure. There were, however, two vacant sites—that in Charles Street and that opposite the Horse Guards in Whitehall. Out of the savings that might be made in rent and messengers, if the present arrangement were put an end to, good, useful offices might be built on one of these sites. He calculated that the present tumble-down buildings cost in rent, repairs, extra messengers, and so on, about £100,000 per annum, although it was difficult to get at the precise amount, because the accounts were so mixed up. The Government had been calling upon Local Authorities to find work for the unemployed, and he thought they might very well find some themselves by carrying out the suggestions he had made. He believed that if they did they would actually save money. It would be very easy indeed for the Government, if they desired, to borrow money for the purpose at a low rate of interest. As to what had been said about the Estimates, he was afraid that Government Departments in making Estimates purposely left out items that ought to be included. In the Estimate for the Admiralty buildings the architect's fee of £10,000 was not included. Either there were some very stupid men in the Department, or that item was purposely left out of the Estimate. There was no reason why it should have been left out unless the Department wanted to bamboozle the House of Commons. He knew from his own experience that there was no difficulty, provided that there were no accidents, in estimating within a few thousand pounds the cost of the biggest buildings. To turn to another subject, he found that certain sums were spent upon the improvement of certain rooms of the officials of the Admiralty without consulting the House. He did not think that such a thing should be done, at all events without any information being given to the House. One Government was just as bad as another on these questions, and when the occupants of the two Front Benches were against the economists the latter were "between the Devil and the deep sea." He knew that it was usual during discussions of the Estimates for Members of the Government to make very fine promises, and he hoped that the present Government would endeavour to keep the promises they made. He knew that it required a very strong-minded and strong-backed individual to manage a Government Department properly in these matters. He knew from his very short experience on the Public Accounts Committee the difficulty of dealing with these questions. The Parliamentary head of the Department could, if he chose to assert his authority, see that all these officers did their duty. He would recommend the right hon. Gentleman to reduce all the salaries except those of the lower grade officials, who generally did all the work and got the least pay. They got from the poorly-paid Scotch officials much better work than they did from the highly-paid English officials. The question of new buildings was a big one, worthy the attention of the Government; and he certainly thought the Government might wisely devote to the purpose some of the immense sums of money now spent on the Army and Navy and on Royal grants.

*Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he wished to recur to an inquiry made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University as to the new office established in Finsbury Square for the Factory Inspectors. He supposed it was not the only one of the kind that had been provided, because the Secretary of State, in reply to a question, had mentioned several offices in large towns. He suspected that a charge was made for these offices under the Vote for the Chief Inspector of Factories, and if that was the case he would ask why this matter was not dealt with in one Vote instead of two? Could the right hon. Gentleman opposite tell them at how many towns these offices had been opened, and if it was intended still to increase the number? He should like to know whether inquiries in respect of workshops could be addressed to these Inspectors? who were Inspectors not less of workshops than of factories. He should also like to know whether the new offices of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools had been found satisfactory?

Sir A. ROLLIT said, that inasmuch as the University of London made a profit for the Government in the balance of fees, it ought, at any rate, to be put in a position to do its duty to the public and to its candidates. It was not now able to do so, however, particularly through the want of adequate accommodation for the student examinations. The Millbank site was practically impossible; but, whatever was done, the present state of things could not continue. The University was being reorganised; it would have to do more teaching, and its work, consequently, would be largely increased, while steps had been taken to make the examinations in some cases of even a more practical character than in the past. The Senate could not do justice to the candidates or to the public as an Examining Body. The Estimates had been adopted year after year without any advance being made, but now, unless he received an assurance that there would be no inordinate delay in providing the necessary additional accommodation for the University, he should feel bound to move a reduction of the Vote, and take a Division on the subject with a view of drawing the serious attention of the Department to the matter. He saw an item for the adoption of the electric light in certain of the Departments, and he wished to express a strong hope that the lecture theatre would be lighted in this way. At present the theatre was simply in a state of darkness visible. At a recent meeting of Convocation there they had found it almost impossible to transact the proper work. With regard to the question of the improvement and consolidation of the offices of the Public Departments, the hon. Member for Peterborough need not have apologised for occupying the attention of the Committee with the subject. He agreed that the question was one of great importance, and one in regard to which there was room for the exercise of great economy. The Offices of the Board of Trade—one of the most important, if not the most important Department of the Government—were unsuitable for the work to be done, especially when it was borne in mind what large deputations had to be received from time to time.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, he would like to say a few words with reference to the University of London. Long before the hon. Member for Peterborough raised these points in regard to National Expenditure—for the last 20 years—he had called attention to the requirements of the University of London. It was fixed in a Government building which was not under its control, and all the expenditure on it was regulated by the Office of Works, which knew nothing of the business it conducted, and which certainly did not understand what were its requirements; consequently, he thought the Committee would see that the expenditure upon it might well be totally insufficient, and often in the wrong direction. The sum paid for the University of London was miserable in comparison with the amount paid for many University Colleges, and the examinations were interfered with and limited in many ways in consequence of the insufficiency of the accommodation. If the Government could see their way to devoting £5,000 or £6,000 a year towards meeting the claims of the University that amount would be by no means too large, considering the enormous number of students presenting themselves for examination. The matter was a pressing one, and he hoped it would receive attention. He quite agreed that Government sites might be utilised for Government buildings if common sense regulated the erection of these buildings; but in this matter the rules which guided private individuals were never observed on behalf of the country. They had recently had an example in the case of the new Admiralty buildings. Next, he observed in the Vote one item towards the cost of the Eastern wing of the National Portrait Gallery, the maximum balance not to exceed £4,000. He did not consider the grant an extravagant one, and he wished to know, if more than the maximum balance was required, who was to provide it? It was, of course, very important that both national servants and national property should be properly housed, and, so far as this great collection of pictures was concerned, this grant would be money well spent. Another item in this long list, to which he would like to refer, was the lumping together of rents, insurance, &c., under Class III., and he thought it was necessary to appoint a practical person to have control over this Department. He trusted these matters would be considered.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I quite sympathise with the view that has been expressed as to the necessity of some provision with respect to the laboratory for the London University. The Government were prepared this year to have entered into a scheme for providing a large laboratory for the University and the Science and Art Department, and it was proposed that it should be erected on the site of the old Millbank Prison. But I believe the authorities of the University objected to that site, and I am not sure that they did not also object to joining with the Science and Art Department. At any rate, the proposal was not found to be satisfactory, and the Government, finding that they had not much money which could be used for the purpose this year, arrived at a compromise with the authorities of the University under which they postponed for the present the proposal for a laboratory, and instead made a grant for the purpose of lighting the University by electricity. They hope to be able, before next year's

Estimates are prepared, to come to an agreement as to the best position for the laboratory. A proposal has also been made for new rooms for examinations, to be used jointly with the Civil Service Commissioners, but that also has fallen through, although, as I have said, our views were sympathetic, and at present I do not know that there is any proposal on the subject. I think, however, that those who are interested in these matters have a strong case for consideration. The London University receives a very large sum in fees, which is paid over to the Exchequer.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the question of reducing the fees?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: So long as it is necessary to provide increased accommodation for the University, I am afraid it is quite impossible to enter into that question.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: We have now got free education.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how that arises.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Yes, but we have to provide the money.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES, referring to an item in the Vote of £1,390 for the maintenance and repair of Burlington House and London University, said, he did not know which portion referred to Burlington House and which to the London University, but he believed he was right in saying that part of the sum which referred to Burlington House was expended in keeping up that portion of the building connected with the Royal Academy. That being so, he must enter his strong protest against any public money being expended on such a purpose as this. The portion of Burlington House to which he referred was in the occupation of a close corporation representing a particular section of art extraordinarily wealthy, so wealthy that no man had a notion of their possessions, possessed of an immense number of works of art, and every year in receipt of such an enormous revenue that it ought to make them ashamed to ask for any portion of public money at all for the maintenance of the building in which they were lodged. He not only said they were not entitled to it, but that it was a positive misuse of public money to apply any part of it to what was practically an accretion to the revenue of the Royal Academy. The Royal Academy only represented a particular side of art. If he were going to subventionise art one of the first things he should do would be to devote some attention to the national side of art — namely, water colours; but these Royal Academicians thought of nothing but oil colours, and practically ignored and relegated to an inferior position statuary and all other forms of art, whilst the whole of the public subventions were devoted to a particular form of art and to a particular close corporation representing that form. He boldly said that the Royal Academy, instead of doing anything for the furtherance of art, had done much to discourage and keep back artists, and had fostered an extremely bad school of art, founded, first of all, on the Greek school, which originated in the very worst and most discreditable period of Greek history. Had it been founded upon the noble Egyptian art——

The CHAIRMAN (interposing) said, the hon. Member was wandering from the subject of the Amendment.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that, without going into particulars, he would merely say that here was a body, receiving a public subvention in the way of the maintenance of this building, which, first of all, was enormously rich, which really fostered an extremely false and bad style of art, and only one particular form of the many sides of art; that it was encouraged by subventions and the yearly presence of Ministers who ought not to be there, for it was not decent of them to go to a banquet of this sort and crack poor jokes. He strongly protested against one farthing of public money being devoted to the maintenance of this building in which there was yearly an exhibition so profitable that the Academicians ought to be well able to pay for its maintenance. He did not know what portion of this sum was devoted to Burlington House; but it seemed to him time that this enormously rich body should cease to be fostered by the illegitimate presence of Ministers, and that the grants to it for the maintenance of the building should be at once and for ever withdrawn. They had ruined Burlington House, to begin with, and, instead of leaving it the thing of beauty it was, had made it a hissing and a reproach.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE was afraid he could not state the relative cost of the London University and Burlington House. The chief cost was the maintenance of the exterior of Burlington House, sums having been voted for this purpose for many years up to the present day under an agreement made in 1867. These sums kept the building in structural repair and occasionally paid for gas services and outside fittings. He was not prepared to say that the Board of Works proposed any alteration in that arrangement. The hon. Member had passed certain strictures on the Royal Academy, but that was a matter in which he could not follow the hon. Gentleman. It was a matter of opinion, and he saw no reason for altering the system and practice which had so long prevailed. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had asked him about the charge for the Factory Inspectors' office in Finsbury Circus. That office was not on the same footing as those which the Home Secretary now proposed to establish in various populous centres. The *raison d'être* of that office was that it should be a centre for Mr. Lakeman and his assistants. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Gorst) knew all about the nature of their work. This office was situate in that part of London in which the principal part of the work of the Inspectors lay ; it formed the most convenient centre, and it was taken for that reason. The Home Secretary had obtained Treasury sanction for a large number of offices which were to be established in various large towns in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, but that charge, he imagined, would not fall upon this Vote, but upon a Supplementary Estimate for the Home Office.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : Does not one come here and others of them in another Vote ?

*MR. H. GLADSTONE said, this was a new departure. Last year three offices were established for Superintending Inspectors, and the office in Finsbury Circus was provided for Mr. Lakeman and his assistants. The other 20 offices had only been provided this year after the Estimates were framed, and they would have to fall upon a Supplementary Estimate. The hon. Member for Peterborough raised a question as to the Orange Street Waterworks, and criticised the nature of the water supplied to Trafalgar Square. The colour of the water when it came from the wells was very curious, presenting a yellowish tinge, but it was stated to be the best water in London, and the colour was not objectionable except to the eyesight. He was satisfied there was no harm in the water from a sanitary point of view. His hon. Friend criticised the charge of £25 for the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall. That charge was to defray the cost of the external structure, and it was advisable to keep this work under the control of the Office of Works, as the Banqueting Hall was really a national monument. As to the next question raised concerning the building of Public Offices, in which the various Departments would be concentrated, he could only repeat what he had said on the previous Vote, that he would be glad to set about the work, if he could only get the money. The question, however, was one which should be raised on the Vote for the Treasury. He hoped to be able in a short time to make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject. Everybody would admit that, if the money were available, it would be possible to use the sites already in the possession of the Government for the concentration of offices in large buildings for the accommodation of the various Departments, and thereby to save the present large charges for rents and the unnecessary wear and tear of messengers between the different departmental offices situated in various directions. But it was a question of policy which the Government, and the Government only, could decide. The question of electric lighting at the London University was being seen to, and the theatre was included in the rooms to be so lighted. As to the National Portrait Gallery, about which a question had been asked by the hon. Baronet the Member for St. Pancras, the original Estimate for the building was £60,000. When the work was begun it was found that the Estimate would be exceeded to the extent of £36,000. Mr.

Alexander consented to contribute a further £20,000, making his contribution £80,000 altogether, on the understanding that the Government would provide the remaining £16,000. The Government consented to do that, on a guarantee being given that there would be no further expenditure needed on the building. The building was almost completed, and it reflected great credit on the architect.

SIR J. GOLDSMID said, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman had accidentally omitted to say that the public were very much indebted to Mr. Alexander for his great public liberality. It was an instance of extraordinary public liberality that should be acknowledged in the House of Commons.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE was obliged to the hon. Baronet for reminding him of his duty. But he thought it unnecessary on the present occasion—it had been so often done and properly done in the House of Commons—to bear testimony to Mr. Alexander's generosity and the gratitude the public owed to him.

SIR J. GORST said, he was sorry to hear that the Home Office was about to begin a very improper financial practice in connection with the provision of offices for the new Inspectors of Factories. He thought a protest should at once be made against such action.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE said, he had been asked a question on the subject by the hon. Member for Sheffield, and he had answered his hon. Friend as a matter of courtesy, but he thought the question did not arise at all under the present Vote, and he was not responsible now for the Home Office.

SIR J. GORST said, he was not blaming the right hon. Gentleman at all. In fact, he was speaking entirely in the interest of the First Commissioner of Works and the Secretary to the Treasury. It was admitted that the £145 in the Estimates for the provision of a Factory Department in Finsbury Circus did not by any means represent the amount that would in the end have to be spent for the purpose, and he contended that this further sum ought to be laid before the House in a Supplementary Estimate to be brought in by the First Commissioner of Works. He was not saying anything against the expenditure. He thought the provision of those offices was a most proper object for the expenditure of public money, but the offices ought to be provided not by the Home Office, but by the Department which was especially entrusted with the maintenance of public buildings for the Public Service—the Office of Works. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had very properly called attention to the fact that they were asked to vote a sum of money for the maintenance of Burlington House, while Burlington House was used by a private body—no doubt a body of great distinction—for the purpose of exhibiting pictures. The question naturally arose—why did not this body pay a rent for the use of this national building? He was told that this body charged an admission fee for seeing the pictures; they probably made a considerable sum annually by this exhibition, and that being so he could not see why they should not be made to pay an adequate rent for the use of the building.

MR. H. GLADSTONE said, that in consideration for being allowed the use of Burlington House, free of rent, the Royal Academy had added a new storey and new galleries to the building, and kept it in repair.

SIR J. GORST said, that was a peppercorn rent. Why should it not be a real rent represented by the real commercial value of the building? He had always maintained that all parties, no matter who they were, who got the use of national buildings—buildings that were the property of the nation—should pay for them a proper commercial rent.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, the First Commissioner of Works, in his answers to the various questions put to him, omitted to allude to the very important point made by the hon. Member for Peterborough; that was with regard to the extraordinary differences between the original and revised Estimates fo sanitary improvements in the Public Offices. The original Estimate was £50,000; and it had risen to £95,000, which was almost 50 per cent. He ventured to press the point again on the right hon. Gentleman, and to say that the Committee ought to receive a categorical explanation as to the manner in which the original Estimate was framed.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works had very ingeniously replied to some of the criticisms of hon. Members by saying that if their demands were met it would mean a large expenditure of money which would have to be decided on not by his Department, but by the Government as a whole. He was going to make another suggestion which would involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, which would have to be spent one day, and the sooner the better. He noticed in the Estimates an item of £180 for rent for 32, King Street, Westminster. He could not but believe that a rent of £180 a year for a scandalously inadequate and insanitary building like 32, King Street, Westminster, was a waste of money. It was part of a block of buildings which it was said was going to be removed 20 years ago; but that removal appeared to be further off now than it was then. If it required legislation to effect the removal, let a Bill be promoted; and he believed that Parliament would readily find the money for the purpose of removing the congestion of traffic in Parliament Street, and giving a better view from Whitehall of that building, which of all in Europe he reverenced the most, Westminster Abbey, and of St. Margaret's Church and the Houses of Parliament. In the new National Portrait Gallery we had an excellently constructed addition to the National Gallery, which reflected credit on the donor, the architect, and the builder; but the approaches were inconveniently narrow and crowded. The First Commissioner should see whether it was not possible, by co-operation with the County Council and the authorities of St. Martin's Church, to carry out the scheme for removing the steps of the church, and so improving the approach to the new gallery. Of course, the improvement would have to be made at the public expense; but what better use could be made of public wealth than in beautifying the great Imperial City of London? To the west of the Houses of Parliament there was a tortuous, narrow, and dirty road between them and Lambeth Bridge, and, as the bridge was about to be re-built, the First Commissioner should see whether he could not improve this approach to the Houses of Parliament concurrently with the building of the bridge. The public would sooner spend £1,000,000 upon these improvements than spend £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 more upon the Army or the Navy. If the right hon. Gentleman did not pluck up courage next year to make these proposals, it would be the duty of them not only to oppose his Estimates, but even to vote against the Budget or some financial proposal of a Chancellor of the Exchequer who would not find money for such necessary improvements, which would be made at once in any capital of the Continent.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, that sanitary matters ought to receive instant attention; and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman, instead of asking for £17,000 on the present occasion to put the Public Offices into a sanitary state, should have asked for £45,000. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the germs of disease to get into the Public Offices, as the germs of influenza had got into the House a few years ago, owing to bad ventilation and bad drainage, injuring not only the health of Members, but the health of the gentlemen of the Reporters' Gallery and the ladies in the Ladies' Gallery. In connection with the sum of £100,000 for the protection and maintenance of ancient buildings in Great Britain, he had asked last year a question of the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works—a question which had not been satisfactorily answered—in reference to the Druidical stones in the Island of Lewis.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Sir J. GOLDSMID): Order, order! There is nothing in reference to those stones in the Estimates.

MR. WEIR said, he objected to the proposed expenditure for the provision of offices for the Factory Inspectors in Finsbury Circus. It was a most careless method of conducting business to have a number of establishments scattered all over the place. The most economical and effective system was to have all the work done under one roof. £31,645 for coal, gas, oil, candles, soap, water, &c., for England, and only £1,000 for the same commodities for Scotland showed that Scotland was not treated fairly. Why that country was dealt with in such a niggardly fashion passed his comprehension. He had got to learn that these commodities cost more in England than they did in Scotland. There might be more frugality exercised in Scotland than in England. There was a sum of £1,500 taken for new furniture for England and only £500 taken for Scotland. He should like to know what became of the old furniture. Did it become the perquisite of some official? To his mind, the proper way to deal with it would be to send it to an auction room.

SIR A. ROLLIT said, he hoped the hon. Member for King's Lynn would move to reduce the item for Burlington House and the London University. The explanation given by the First Commissioner of Works was wholly inadequate. Here was a body which was not a Government Department occupying premises which were kept in repair and upon which only a nominal rent was reserved by the Government. It seemed that only a peppercorn rent was fixed on condition that a storey was added to the building. But the Academy authorities had the use of that storey. It was really a Government subsidy to a private or semi-private undertaking, without the latter being subjected to any test as to the efficiency of its art teaching or the adequacy of its improvements in art in this country. Personally, he did think the advancement of art a thing which the Government should take under its own control.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE said, the arrangement with reference to Burlington House had existed so long without exception being taken by hon. Members opposite that he could not undertake at the first breath of criticism to hold out any hope that he would suggest any alteration. He would make inquiries into the matter, but at present he could not undertake to say that it would be his duty to intervene to upset an arrangement which had existed so long without objection. With regard to the removal of the block of buildings in Parliament Street, and the improvement of the approach to the Houses of Parliament by way of Lambeth Bridge, the matter was not quite so simple as some appeared to imagine. He would be glad to confer with the London County Council, but in these matters he was a very humble person indeed, his powers being exceedingly limited. He would be willing to do a great deal if he had the money; but if he were to accept all the proposals which hon. Members opposite had made on the present Vote and the preceding one, the Government would have to incur an expenditure of millions of money. There must be reasonable moderation in these things. His hon. Friend the Member for Battersea had urged the necessity for improving the approach to the National Portrait Gallery. A proposal to remove the steps in front of St. Martin's Church was made some time ago, but the outcry that was raised showed that the public would not tolerate such a proceeding. The barracks were to be eventually altogether demolished, and it might be considered whether any new approach could be made in that quarter to the National Portrait Gallery. He agreed that something might be done eventually to make such an approach as had been suggested by the western and northern sides of the National Gallery. As far as this year was concerned, he was at the end of his tether, and he could not hold out any promise of further expenditure.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he felt disappointed at what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in regard to Burlington House. If his suggestion were adopted the Government would find themselves in possession of a little money wherewith to carry out the work that the hon. Member for Battersea considered so necessary. The Royal Academy paid no rent. The right hon. Gentleman said that was because they had added a storey to Burlington House. Well, by doing that they had defaced one of the finest buildings in all Europe, and they should be made to pay a swinging rent by way of fine for that act of vandalism. He maintained that they ought to pay a rent, the site being one that ought to yield a large amount of money to the Government. The Royal Academy was a most selfish Corporation, and afforded a strong and not very creditable contrast in their conduct to that of Mr. Alexander. He had the advantage of some acquaintance with that gentleman, and he could say that throughout his conduct had been most public-spirited and generous. The rich Corporation of selfish showmen were making thousands a year, and yet they not only refused to pay any rent, but came down to that House for this large sum for repairs. He moved to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B (Maintenance and Repairs) be reduced by £1,000 in respect of Burlington House."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

MAJOR DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, that before the right hon. Gentleman opposite replied, he should like to ask whether the Vote under discussion did not include the cost of repairs to that part of Burlington House which was occupied by the Royal Society and the other learned Societies? This country did not do much for science, and he should be inclined to vote against the proposed reduction of the Vote.

SIR R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that in his opinion the hon. Member for Battersea had made a very proper suggestion as to the approaches to the House of Commons. The answer given to the hon. Member was not quite satisfactory.

*THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Sir J. GOLDSMID): There has been an Amendment moved which limits the discussion to the item for Burlington House.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, there was some misapprehension in regard to the Vote. Burlington House was divided into two portions, one of which was occupied by the Royal Academy at a peppercorn rent under a lease for 999 years, granted in 1867 upon condition of the Society adding an additional storey to the building and maintaining the building in repair at their own expense. The other part of the building was occupied by the Royal and other learned Societies, which were far from being rich bodies, being mostly supported by subscriptions. The money now asked for was entirely for the repair of the buildings occupied by those learned Societies. The Royal Academy of Arts were bound to keep their part of the building in repair both outside and in, and the sum which the Committee was now asked to vote had no reference to that Department.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, he had begun by asking what part of the Vote affected the Royal Academy and what part the University of London. He did not consider that the Art Society of picture showmen were entitled to any assistance from the State at all. Did the right hon. Gentleman opposite mean to tell him that the whole of this sum was spent on that part of Burlington House occupied by the learned Societies?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: That is my information.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, there, therefore, only remained the objection—and it was a most serious one—that this Corporation paid no rent for the enormous and valuable accommodation the State gave them. This, he thought, was almost a sufficient reason for them to mark their dissatisfaction by taking a Division on the Vote. But if not a single farthing of the sum asked for would go to the Royal Academy, he should ask leave to withdraw his Motion to reduce the Vote. He thought, however, that the Royal Academy ought to be made to pay some rent.

SIR A. ROLLIT said, he approved of the determination of the hon. Member to withdraw the Amendment, but he should like to know the terms of the agreement between the Government and the Royal Academy.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID said, he must protest against the attack which had been made by the hon. Gentleman opposite upon the President and members of the Royal Academy. The language the hon. Member had used did not reflect credit either upon the hon. Gentleman's taste or his judgment.

MR. JOHN BURNS agreed that it would be unreasonable to ask for a reduction of this Vote until the Committee saw the exact terms of the agreement with the Royal Academy. There was a great deal of difference between the conditions under which pictures were exhibited by the Royal Academy and the conditions of art generally in England in 1894 and those which prevailed in 1867 It seemed to him that either the Secretary to the Treasury or the First Commissioner of Works ought to place the terms of the agreement between the Government and the Royal Academy in the Library of the House, and ought to require the Royal Academy to furnish Parliament with some account of the manner in which they disposed of the money they took. Some artists regarded the Royal Academy as a close Corporation on which social prejudices prevailed, and which yielded to prejudices to the exclusion of genuine artistic merit. The Royal Academy ought to be made more representative in its character, instead of being, as it was now, a mere private trading concern. Many artists thought that pictures of real merit were frequently excluded from exhibition for whimsical reasons that could not be understood except by the close Corporation that bossed the show at Burlington House. He was as fond of pictures as anybody, and was as anxious as anybody that the country should do what was necessary for art, but he should refuse to vote another £50 for the Royal Academy whilst the present condition of things—which he should oppose through thick and thin—existed. Money was made by the Royal Academy out of their exhibition, and many people declared that it was misspent. Until the accounts were submitted to the House the criticisms offered against the action of this Corporation would be justified. No other Government in Europe extended such privileges to a close Corporation of artists as was extended by the Government of this country to the Royal Academy. The selection of pictures for a proper representative exhibition of works of art ought to be placed in the hands of a competent Committee.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, he could assure the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir J. Goldsmid) that he took as much interest in true art as he himself. He did not think that sympathy with genuine art was demonstrated by buying expensive pictures and furniture under the advice of a Bond Street dealer. He had a detestation of false art, which was as rampant on the walls of the Royal Academy as anywhere. After the explanation which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and with the expression of a hope that the agreement between the Royal Academy and the Government would be laid on the Table of the House, he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON said, that as they spent so much money on this building, they had a right to ask why they had no share in the control of it. He feared that this Royal Academy was kept up for a class, and only a class. Seeing that Burlington House site was given to the Academy at such a low rent, the exhibition ought to be free to the public at least on some days during the week.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): On one day.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he did not even think one day would be sufficient. He thought the public ought to have some return for their money. He did not know if that money was expended on the dinner annually given to West End people——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That does not arise on the Vote.

*Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he did not require to be told what was in the Vote; but they had a duty towards the British public, and he thought that unless the Academy was thrown open to the people once a week at least they ought to refuse to vote this sum.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to get some further information relative to the approaches to the House of Commons from the north side. He believed that if the First Commissioner of Works would make further inquiries he would find that there was a great distinction between the block from Parliament Street to King Street and the block from King Street to Delahay Street. Of course, it would be quite impossible to deal with the north side of Great George Street, because there were a number of buildings which could not well be displaced. But, with regard to the block between King Street and Parliament Street, some 15 years ago he was acting on behalf of several persons who then occupied the houses immediately on the west side of Parliament Street, and he remembered very well that compensation was paid by the then Government for possession at that time, 1878. At present, many of the tenants were occupying only at three months' notice, and therefore a large expenditure would not be required for the

Government to obtain possession of this valuable site, and thereby effect a very great improvement. With regard to the syndicate which the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned, it would be found that it only had to do with the north side of Great George Street. The country had actually paid thousands of pounds for three-fourths of the site between Parliament Street and King Street some 15 years ago.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: Power was given to the Syndicate to clear the block between Parliament Street and King Street, and to make a new frontage in continuation of the Home Office frontage. In any scheme now brought forward we should have to deal with that Syndicate.

SIR R. WEBSTER: The Office of Works bought all the houses on the north side of the block. I am quite certain of that.

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: The Office of Works had entered into an agreement with the Syndicate.

MR. BARTLEY said, that he found two items for insurance, together amounting to £83. How was it that one or two of these public buildings were insured and that the others were not? It was obvious that where the Government possessed an enormous number of buildings insurance was out of the question. Another point to which he wished to draw attention was the grant made for the third time to Nottingham in connection with the Probate Registry buildings. Here they had a town favoured in a most extraordinary manner. In London they did not get such advantages, and he supposed the reason was that they had not their proper share of representation in the House of Commons.

MR. H. GLADSTONE: The Government do not insure buildings except where there is an express covenant requiring them to do so. The buildings alluded to by the hon. Member for North Islington are held under such a covenant. In regard to the grant to Nottingham, it is for the purpose of providing a new Probate Registry Office in combination with the Post Office.

MR. HANBURY asked where the information was to be found relating to the item of £10,000—appropriations in aid on Government property? They were unable to say what property was referred to. He would like to know whether this was an actual or only an estimated sum? He also wished to know whether it was intended to light all the Government Offices by electricity? They had already installed it at the Foreign Office, he believed. Then he would like to be told why the State should provide stables for the First Lord of the Treasury and for the Chancellor of the Exchequer when they were not provided for other Ministers; and why a residence at Queen Anne's Gate should be found for the First Naval Lord? Why should not the Adjutant General of the Army also have a residence? Finally, could the right hon. Gentleman say whether in the new Admiralty buildings provision was made for a residence for the First Naval Lord?

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I am not able to throw much light on the question of the residence of the First Sea Lord or on that of the stables of the Ministers named. Such provision has been made for many years, and I am not prepared at the moment to say whether it is right or wrong. No provision has been made in the new Admiralty buildings for a residence for the First Naval Lord. As to electric lighting, I believe the Foreign Office is the only Public Department which has been lighted by electricity, and I imagine that has been done because the building is used for official receptions. I am prepared to hand the hon. Member for Preston a list of the rents which make up the item of £10,000 to which he has referred.

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said, he desired to have some explanation of the large increase in the item of the expenses of the office of the Inspector General of Bankruptcy in Carey Street. Last year the sum paid was £1,820; this year £2,810 was asked for, and no reason was vouchsafed for the increase.

MR. H. GLADSTONE: The only explanation, I believe, is the increased work of the Department.

MR. BARTLEY said, that had nothing to do with this item, which related merely to the rent of the premises. He certainly did not think the explanation satisfactory. If the right hon. Gentleman looks into the matter he will find, on page 45, that part of the premises are sub-let. Are we to understand that the money received as rent for them comes back afterwards as an appropriation in aid?

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: In reference to the item referred to on page 45, I am afraid I cannot just now say more than that some of the premises are sub-let, and that the rents received go to the appropriation in aid.

*SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he wished to enter his protest against the unsatisfactory character of the reply given to the hon. Member for Battersea regarding the approach to the Houses of Parliament from Parliament Street and Lambeth Bridge. Hon. Members on both sides of the House concurred with the Member for Battersea that the approaches were of an exceedingly unsatisfactory character, and although the First Commissioner of Works had indicated that he had no money at his disposal with which to effect the improvement, he did think they should have some assurance that this question would be really taken up in earnest. Surely the right hon. Gentleman might press the question upon the attention of the Cabinet. If undertaken in a statesmanlike way—[*a laugh*]—there would be some hope of an effective improvement being carried out. Hon. Members might ridicule the use of the epithet "statesmanlike," but he considered it properly applicable in this connection. Probably that laugh from hon. Members opposite might explain why this improvement had been so long delayed. A question of this kind should be dealt with in a broad and far-sighted manner. It should be treated as a whole and in time. The Government should examine this question of the approaches to Parliament, and consider how far the cost of improving the King Street approach and that from Lambeth could be met by the increased value of the new frontages thus obtained. That would be dealing with the question in a "statesmanlike" way. If the Government would at once deal with the King Street and the Lambeth approaches they would benefit the people of London, who were now in want of employment, and at the same time would permanently add to the attractiveness of a building which was one of the most splendid and most interesting in the whole world. This subject merited more careful attention than it had evidently received from the First Commissioner.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) asked as to the electric lighting at the Foreign Office, whether that establishment had its own installation or whether it was supplied from the outside; also whether it was high or low tension electricity, and how many volts?

*MR. A. C. MORTON pressed the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to say that he would use his influence to secure that the Royal Academy would be opened free to the public at least once a week. With regard to the answer of the First Commissioner of Works to the hon. Member for Battersea, he did not blame the right hon. Gentleman; they ought rather to attack the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because this was a matter which must be taken up by the Government. He did not think that in this respect it could be suggested that they were advocating anything that was either unnecessary or extravagant.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT thought the hon. Member asked rather a large order. He did not think it was part of his business to ask the Royal Academy to make such an arrangement, considering the Academy possessed the buildings under an agreement made in 1867 for 999 years. If the hon. Member would wait till the end of the lease possibly some re-arrangement might be made in the interests of the public.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) thought with the hon. Member for Peterborough it was a great shame that there was not a free public day at the Royal Academy. Unlike his brother in Paris, the London artizan, unless he had a shilling in his pocket, was absolutely debarred from seeing the art products of the year, and so cultivating whatever æsthetic tastes he might have. It was not sufficient to give him occasional access to the National Gallery.

*MR. A. C. MORTON said, he did not intend to wait 999 years before he again raised this question. But he reiterated that, as the Royal Academy had got the use of a valuable site for a very small sum, the least they could do in return was to give the public free admission on one day. He would not divide the Committee on the present occasion, but would give the Financial Secretary till the Report stage to consider the matter.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

3. £185,210, to complete the sum for surveys of the United Kingdom.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said that, in reference to this Vote, he would like to point out that so long ago as December, 1892, the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the work of the Ordnance Survey gave in its Report, and he would now like to be informed to what extent it was proposed to give effect to the recommendations of that Committee. We shall be glad to see to what extent and by what method Her Majesty's Government propose to give effect to the recommendations of that Committee. The Report of the Departmental Committee having been issued as long ago as 1892, it is obvious that Her Majesty's Government have had ample time to consider their proposal and to mature their deliberate opinions. I assume, therefore, that the Estimates now before us contain the whole policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Ordnance Survey in the future. I may remind the House that the most important recommendation in that Report was that the immediate revision of the 25-inch and six-inch maps should be undertaken. The Estimate for that work for the current year alone, according to the estimate of the Director General of the Ordnance Survey, was £16,000. But I observe that the increase on the total Estimate for the present year is only £1,000, and it seems to me that is hardly an adequate increase in the Estimates to begin with. They are interesting for another reason: they form a new departure altogether on the part of the Board of Agriculture (which is now responsible for the conduct of the Ordnance Survey) likely in many senses to be fitting and satisfactory. It appears in the Appendix at the close of the Report, showing for the first time, as far as I remember, how much of the funds at the disposal of the Department are spent upon the production of the different maps, and in carrying out the different works which it is their duty to perform. I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to the item in the Appendix providing for the general revision of the six-inch and 25-inch maps for Great Britain, in order that none of them shall remain unrevised for longer than 20 years. That work, according to the present Estimates, is to be completed by the year 1910, at a total outlay of £640,000. I observe that if the proposals of the Director General had been carried out, the same work ought to have been completed by the year 1904, entailing an expenditure of £630,000. The Committee will see that upon this point the plan of the Government involves a delay of six years as compared with the Director General's plan. But I want to go a little further and ask how much of the £640,000 will be required for the completion of the six-inch map? because £600,000 was the sum estimated for completing the 25-inch map alone. This is important, because it was pointed out most emphatically, both by the Director General of the Ordnance Survey and by the Departmental Committee, that a delay of a single year in completing this work would involve a large increase in the total cost of carrying it out. I should like to have an answer on this point from my right hon. Friend opposite, and also to know what is the additional expense the country will be put to by the delay which has already occurred in carrying out the work?

Mr. H. GARDNER: The work for which year?

Mr. CHAPLIN: For 1893-4. I am referring to this work of proceeding with the 25-inch map. Again, I want to know how much of the £600,000 left from the revision of the six-inch map will be required for the completion of the Town-scale map already in hand. At the bottom of the page there is a note stating that a portion of the money will be expended for that purpose. The list of these maps is already very formidable. The Report of the Commission for 1893 states that—

> "The large Town-surveys now in hand are London, Plymouth, Devonport, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Gateshead, Jarrow, Blackburn, South Shields, Tynemouth, North Shields, Wallsend, Cardiff, and Glasgow."

Then come the towns in Edinburghshire, Haddingtonshire, Wigtownshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Fifeshire, and Ross-shire. The maps for the towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire are already prepared. There are maps of 22 large towns already in hand, and they will have to be completed out of the £90,000 allocated for completing the towns in the country in addition to the six-inch map. I want to know how much will be left for the important work of revising the 25-inch and six-inch maps for the rest of the country? I must again direct the attention of the Committee to the Report of the Departmental Committee and ask them what they think of it. On page 11 they state that some of the 25-inch maps are dated 1855, and have never been revised since. We have some evidence of the great cost that will be entailed if the Ordnance Surveys are allowed to remain too long without revision, necessitating in some instances almost new surveys. It is obvious that the 25-inch survey should be commenced without delay, and I think the Committee will be anxious to hear from the right hon. Gentleman how much will be left after the completion of the 22 large Town-surveys for proceeding with the important work of the 25-inch and six-inch maps. Then there is another feature in this new departure of the Government which is far more important than all, to which I will also call the attention of the Committee. The Committee will notice the last item but one from the bottom of the page—"For the revision of Town-scale maps"—the cost over and above the revision of the 25-inch scale being paid by the towns requiring revision on the larger scale. But I observe there is no Estimate made at all for the total completion of this work. Nothing whatever is said as to the date by which the Government anticipate it will be completed, and this is explained in a paragraph which, I think, is the most important in this Report, issued by the Board of Agriculture. They say the Treasury issued a Minute, dated 18th of May, 1855, directing that the plans of towns containing more than 4,000 inhabitants, which had hitherto been drawn on a scale of five-eighths of an inch to a mile, should be drawn on a larger scale, equivalent to 1·276. This Minute remained in force until the 30th of January, 1894, when it was formally revoked by the Treasury. The reasons which led to the discontinuance of surveys on a larger scale than 1-500 are fully stated in a Treasury Minute of 1893 and need not be re-stated now; but the general result is, that after the completion of the Town-surveys now in hand, no surveys will be made, and no plans will be revised at the cost of the State on a larger scale than 1-500. I think we are fully entitled to ask what are the grounds upon which the Government feel themselves to be justified in abandoning altogether this very important class of work which has hitherto been carried on by the Ordnance Survey, not only with regard to the future, which is perhaps of less importance, but in the revision of the mass of work, done in the past. Are there any other grounds, apart from the expenditure necessary for carrying out the work, which justify the Government in abandoning the revision of the plans already made—without which the whole amount spent on this important work will be absolutely thrown away?—because, as pointed out by the Director General and by the Departmental Committee, these maps—especially the large-scale ones—become within an appreciable period of time, unless revised, almost obsolete and practically worthless for future reference. Is there any other ground for the abandonment, apart from the cost? Two questions arise, and I am sure the Committee will be glad of an answer to them. First, what has been the total expenditure by the Ordnance Survey upon the production of Town-maps on a scale larger than 1-500 from the commencement up to the present time? I venture to think it must amount to a very large sum. Secondly, what has been the usual amount expended annually upon the revision of these maps? Upon important work of this character since 1855 the expenditure of public money both in survey and revision must have been large. As far as I can see, there is great danger that it will now all be thrown away, for it is essential that these maps should be revised within a reasonable period. The Committee upon this point say—

> "We find that while the large-scale maps are excellent in quality, and while they fully meet the purpose for which they were designed, the very largeness of the scale practically leads to their getting out of date. This defect is more apparent in the 25-inch plans of the Survey since 1854, and still more so in the Town-plans on the scale of 5 feet, 10 feet, and 10·56 feet per mile. Scarcely any of them have been revised, and it is urgently necessary that the advantage of these splendid maps should not be destroyed for want of a regular system of revision."

Now, the right hon. Gentleman may tell me that the revision will in future be carried out in the same way as in the past provided the towns desire it, and are willing to bear the expense themselves. I have no doubt they will in some cases be ready to take that burden upon themselves, but in many cases they will not. They will possibly say to the Board of Agriculture —"This has been your work; you have carried it out in the past; you have borne the expense of the production of these maps without consulting us about it, and it is your duty, therefore, to see that a proper system of revision is carried out." If that should be so, what is to become of these Town-scale maps produced at such enormous cost where the towns are not willing to bear the expense of their revision in the future? What are the grounds, apart from expense—a matter on which the Treasury has always a good deal to say—which have induced Her Majesty's Government to come to this very serious decision? I think I may add another reason to show that it is desirable that these Town-maps should be maintained upon their present scale and properly revised—namely, that they are of enormous use and importance for the purposes of the registration of title of real property in towns. Registration of title is a matter in which Members on both sides of the House profess great interest, and if these maps disappear one of the greatest facilities for the registration of title will disappear with them. The Board of Agriculture have no doubt carefully considered and weighed the objections to the course which I venture to propose, and I think the Committee will be glad and will expect to have a full explanation and reply to the questions I have put to the right hon. Gentleman. I wish to say that in making these observations I have been actuated by no feeling of antagonism or hostility to the work of the Department over which the right hon. Gentleman presides; on the contrary, I know that in dealing with this subject the right hon. Gentleman has had to meet difficulties with which every head of a Government Department is confronted when he makes a demand for increased expenditure from the Treasury, and it is with the view of assisting the right hon. Gentleman to get his reasonable and proper demands met by the Treasury that I have made these observations. Enormous sums have in the past been spent on this important work, and it would be a great misfortune and a deplorable waste of public money if for any small or ill-timed economy a great part of the valuable work that has been done by the Ordnance Survey is thrown away.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his friendly tone towards the Department. For the first time in the history of the Survey the Vote has been placed before the Committee of the House of Commons in a plain and intelligible form; and notwithstanding the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman, I claim that the Survey has never been in so satisfactory a condition in every respect as at the present moment. That satisfactory condition is, I may say, mainly due to the action of the right hon. Gentleman in appointing the Committee over which an hon. Baronet opposite presided. That Committee made a most valuable and exhaustive Report, and the House is in possession of a Minute of the Board of Agriculture which, with some very slight modifications, carried out the valuable suggestions contained in the Report. I differ from the right hon. Gentleman's view that the Committee reported that the most important work of the Department was the revision of the 25-inch map. What the Committee said was that the most important work was the one-inch map, because that was the map which was most popular, and the completion of which was most demanded.

MR. CHAPLIN: It has been already completed.

MR. H. GARDNER: Yes; I was going to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that we have made arrangements for the completion of the revision of the one-inch map at an early date, and I hope the Committee will accept that as a satisfactory statement. I may say that the work is being carried out at a more rapid rate than has hitherto been adopted. The right hon. Gentleman says the Estimate is only increased by £1,000, but he has forgotten that in addition we are employing 93 Engineers, whose cost is included in the Army Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman inquired with regard to the six-inch map; but he has forgotten that the 25-inch map and the six-inch map are based on one and the same survey, and that therefore the one Estimate includes both. I am unable to say what portion of the Vote will go to the completion of the Town-maps, but I am informed by the best authorities that a sufficient sum has been included in the £90,000 for the completion of the Town-maps and the revision of the six-inch and 25-inch maps. With regard to the main ground of the right hon. Gentleman's criticism, that is the Town-maps, the right hon. Gentleman seeks to convey to the House that the new departure taken by the Department would be detrimental to the country generally, and he went on to ask what ground we had for taking that new departure. The ground we had was the recommendation of the very excellent Committtee which the right hon. Gentleman himself appointed. The right hon. Gentleman read to the Committee some observations of the Committee as to the importance of these Town-maps, but he might have gone a little farther and read the recommendation of the Committee with regard to those maps. He doubted whether the House realised what was the amount of money spent upon these maps. The Town-maps were useful only for local and not for Imperial or National purposes; but, nevertheless, they would be revised by the staff of the Survey, under certain conditions, where the Local Authorities desired it, and were willing to defray the cost of the work over and above the cost of revising the 25-inch map. What the Government had to do was to take the maps of a National character as against maps of a local character, and he thought there was a strong case for giving the preference to the revision of the former. If he wanted corroboration upon this point he could point to the statement of the hon. Baronet last year, when he said that these 10-inch maps were the bane of the Ordnance Survey. He did not think, therefore, that the Government could be accused of negligence in dropping these maps in order to make progress with the 25-inch map.

MAJOR DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he thought it was desirable that the maps should be revised every 15 years. He understood that the increase in the amount of the Estimate was due to the fact that more engineers were to be put on the survey.

MR. H. GARDNER explained that the money hitherto allotted for town maps was to be applied to the purposes of 25-inch maps.

MAJOR DARWIN said, he understood that the recommendation of the Committee was that the maps were to be revised every 15 years, whereas the Appendix to the Estimates said 20 years. They would certainly become ineffective in populous districts after such a length of time. He trusted that the period of 15 years would not be extended. It appeared to him that the Ordnance Survey maps ought to be published in a more suitable form for the convenience of the general public, and he believed that if the Ordnance Survey adopted the recommendations of the Committee they would increase the sale very considerably. From a military point of view it was extremely desirable, for he believed that a good map of the country would be of as much help to our defensive forces as one or two additional battalions.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said that, after reading the Report of the Committee, he was amazed that more money had not been appropriated to the Survey. He did not think that a sufficient sum was allowed for the additional work which was to be done, and he hoped that a larger sum might be allotted to the service. Last year the House psssed a Bill under which there were to be compulsory sales of property, and he must say he could not conceive a greater mistake than that those operations should take place upon the basis of a plan 15 or 20 years old. He was sure that the Government would find assistance from all parts of the House if they proceeded with all possible rapidity with this branch of work. It was very desirable that the engraved maps should be proceeded with at once. He must say that he did not think the dates given in the Estimate for the completion of the work were very encouraging. So far as he understood, the one-inch engraved map was to be finished in eight years from this time and the others not before 1910, while for Ireland the publication would not be completed before 1920. There seemed to be an opinion in favour of a one-inch map, but he thought a six-inch map would be better. His experience in Yorkshire was that a six-inch map was most useful and convenient. Everything was marked upon it, and in case of agricultural transactions the parties knew exactly what the farmer was letting and what the tenant was taking. A frequent revision of the maps was a great saving to the country, because if a map was some years old nobody would accept it, and considerable cost was thrown upon those concerned. He hoped that in the future more progress would be made, and he was sure that such a policy would be approved by all and objected to by none.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, he could not understand why in reference to these maps Scotland should be merged with England. It was not long since, when the Government was in Opposition, that they heard Scotland spoken of as a foreign country. He wanted the right hon. Gentleman to tell them how much of this £90,000 was to be expended upon Scotland, and particularly what sum was to be spent upon the Highlands of Scotland. As the maps at present stood, lochs were shown where there were no lochs, and roads where there were no roads, while existing lochs and roads were not shown at all. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take care to have these errors rectified.

*MR. ROBY (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles) said, he desired to thank the Minister for Agriculture for the interesting and valuable statement he had presented to Parliament with regard to the recommendations of the Committee, and was sorry that the Chairman of that Committee was not in the House. He congratulated the Ordnance Survey upon having now enlisted in its service both the gentleman who formerly presided over the Board and the gentleman who might at some future time preside over the Board. He must say he did not entirely agree with the objections which had been raised by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chaplin). In his opinion, the Board of Agriculture had taken a right step in throwing the cost of the large town maps upon the localities themselves. They were used by the Local Authorities, but were not of much general interest, and the sale to the public was extremely small, while the labour of preparing them was so enormous, and the cost of revision so great, that it had prevented adequate attention being directed to other parts of the survey. The scale upon which they were prepared was so extensive that they actually marked the door-step of a house. If the large towns desired to have such maps they should, of course, be properly prepared, but they ought to be made at the expense of the localities. With regard to the cost of the six-inch maps, which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) desired to have, he thought that could hardly be given separately, as these maps were prepared chiefly by photographic reduction from the 25-inch maps. He must say he found some objection as to the time named in the Estimates for the periodical revision of the maps, and with regard to the dates of completion, which were much further distant than he anticipated. It was a matter for regret that more money could not be expended this year, but, inasmuch as the naval expenditure pressed so heavily on the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he did not see that anything further could be done. He thought that the one-inch, six-inch, and 25-inch maps would be most useful to everybody, and hoped the work would be carried out as promptly as possible. He could not agree with what his Friend the hon. Baronet opposite had said with regard to the superiority of foreign to English-printed maps. He had used the ordinary Government Survey maps for many years, and he had good reason to be satisfied with them.

*CAPTAIN BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, it seemed to him that a 25-inch map was scarcely large enough, and he doubted whether they got an adequate return for their money in respect of the town map on the 25-inch scale. With regard to the revision of maps, it often happened that the maps were useful for a large number of years, because the characteristics of the country did not alter very rapidly, and he thought that if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture arranged for a revision once in 25 years all the requirements of the case would be met. There was another question with regard to the smaller scale maps—he always thought the Ordnance Survey had been too much under the dominance of the military idea. With regard to the actual preparation of the maps, there were two methods by which hills were shown—namely, by contour lines and by shading. The shading was the most effective method, and he thought the Ordnance Survey Department might well consider whether in the new maps the shading should not be universally employed to denote hills. If it had been decided that there should be an alteration in this respect he thought a wise discretion had been used.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he was sure the Committee would be glad to see the valuable information which was given in what was called the Appendix to this Vote. He remembered the question of these town maps being raised when he was at the Treasury, and he could only repeat the statement of the importance of these town maps being kept up to date. Certainly, in Yorkshire the features of the towns were changed from year to year, and it was most important that the maps should be kept correct. He thought that Vote might be postponed, or that information should be given on the Report stage. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture had spoken with pardonable pride of the form in which this Estimate was presented, and had expressed his satisfaction with the condition of the Service. The form, however, in which the Estimates came before the Committee seemed to show that a further sum would be required for the completion of these different works. It had been pointed out that there had been an extension of time beyond that recommended by the Committee. He could quite understand that under the circumstances it was necessary that there should be such an extension. He understood, however, that the Government intended that the work should be completed within the dates mentioned in the Estimates.

MR. H. GARDNER was understood to assent.

MR. JACKSON said, he was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman assented, and he was sure that all those who were interested in the survey would accept the present proposal, if the dates mentioned in the Estimates were adhered to. If, however, the Government intended to adhere to those dates, they had not provided sufficient money for the purpose. The cost of the re-survey of the Scottish counties, which was to be completed by June, 1897, was to be £50,000. Anyone who looked at the figures would see that if the dates mentioned were to be adhered to, there must be an addition during the next three years of £30,000 a year to the Estimates. The Scottish expenditure would amount to £17,000 a year for three years, and the British expenditure to a little over £100,000 a year for 16 years. That being so, instead of the £90,000 a year, provided for by the Estimates, the amount to be provided ought to be £120,000.

*MR. H. GARDNER: The right hon. Gentleman forgets that when work is completed the money provided for that work will be set free.

MR. JACKSON said, that taking the Estimate as it stood, it was quite clear that during the next three years the sums he had stated would have to be provided. A similar result was obtained by looking at the totals. By dividing £3,500,000 over practically 16 years, an annual expenditure was obtained of a little over £240,000 a year, instead of £225,000 a year. If his figures were not correct, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would afford an explanation. If his figures were correct, however, the Committee must clearly understand that the Estimate of this year was not sufficient to guarantee the completion of the work within the period named.

*MR. H. GARDNER: The Estimates have been very carefully prepared by the officers of the Department, and we are thoroughly satisfied that we shall be able to carry out the services specified in the period named. We shall have at our disposal towards the expenditure of future years the sums that will be set free on the completion of some of the work. Those sums can then be devoted towards the completion of the 25-inch map. One or two questions have been asked me which I hope I shall be allowed to reply to briefly, as it is highly desirable that we should get the Vote to-night. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was good enough to congratulate me on the way in which the Estimates are set out. I must at once admit that I am indebted for the form of the Estimates to a suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman himself. As to what the right hon. Gentleman said about the Local Authorities, we propose that in future, if any additional proposals should be made by Local Authorities, they should come to us, and we should carry out their intentions.

Mr. JACKSON : My suggestion was that the cost should be divided between the Government and the Local Authorities. It cannot be said that the maps are not of use to the Government and to the public generally, and my suggestion is that the cost should be apportioned on some basis which the Government could probably determine between them and the Local Authorities.

*Mr. H. GARDNER : Yes, Sir ; and I say at once that I shall be very glad to take that into consideration in the future. Several other questions have been put to me, but I hope the Committee will allow us to have this Vote before 12 o'clock.

Colonel NOLAN : I will not ; I want to talk.

*Mr. H. GARDNER : Then perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman will talk now.

Colonel NOLAN said he would, as that was the only chance he had had of speaking on the Vote. He would be very glad to save the whole of the Vote. While he believed in surveys he did not believe in the way in which they were made in this country at the present time. Wherever he went he found that the British surveys were 50 years old. For the last eight or ten years he had been asking for the map of Galway, and although 1891, 1892, and 1893 had been named in succession as the dates of its production, it had not yet appeared. Last year he was told that some of the sheets had been printed, but, on inquiry at the office in Grattan Street, Dublin, he was told that the officials had not even heard of them. He could never get anything that approached the truth as to the date of their production. He knew that the Minister tried to tell the truth, but he was deceived by his subordinates. If the Department were to continue to pursue its present course the revision would be completed, not in 1920, but in 1950, and he did not see why it should not be left to the people who lived in 1930 or 1940 to pay the cost. He did not think that any military map that was published was of any use for military purposes, simply because it was available to the enemy. In fact, such a map would be more useful to the enemy than it would be to our own military men, because, whilst the latter would know something about the country, the former, but for the map, would not know anything. He objected also to the shaded contours, which were, no doubt, very pretty, but were not of any use.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked whether it was possible that some maps could be printed on materials suitable for folding up and putting into the pockets of pedestrians, hunting men, cyclists, and so on, and also whether in maps of all descriptions there should not be explanatory signs of the markings ?

*Mr. H. GARDNER was understood to say that an explanation of the signs was given on the maps. As to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), the publication of the Galway sheets would begin this year. It must be remembered that Ireland had the advantage of a survey for the six-inch map before England. He would endeavour to obtain the information that had been asked for with regard to the money to be spent on town maps. The re-survey on the 25-inch scale of the maps of the Scottish counties, heretofore surveyed on the six-inch scale only, was to be completed in 1897. As to the lochs, which were said to be shown where there were no lochs, and the roads where there were no roads, he should be glad to be furnished with specific cases, and he would then make inquiry into the subject. He hoped that the Committee would now agree to the Vote.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he must remind the Committee that this was a very important question, that it had not been discussed for an hour and a half, and that many of the questions which had been addressed to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gardner) had not yet been answered. If, however, there was a distinct understanding that the information which had been asked for should be given before the Report stage was taken, he would not oppose the taking of the Vote.

MR. H. GARDNER was understood to indicate assent.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Thursday; Committee to sit again upon Wednesday.

### PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL. (No. 90.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a Second time."—(*Mr. J. E. Ellis.*)

An hon. MEMBER: I object.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, this was a Bill whose object was to remove a small grievance, and it had received the assent of both sides of the House. The present Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour), when Leader of the House, allowed the measure to be read a second time. It was read a second time last year, passed through all its stages, and had been sent up to the House of Lords. Amendments were made in the Bill by the Lords, and a number of those Amendments had been accepted by the promoters and inserted in the present measure. He hoped the House would allow the Bill to go to the Standing Committee.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked whether all the Amendments moved by the Opposition had been accepted?

*MR. J. E. ELLIS said, they had certainly not all been accepted; but the Bill had passed through the Standing Committee, and all the Amendments of the Lords, except one, had been accepted.

MR. BARTLEY: Then I object.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

### LOCOMOTIVE (THRESHING ENGINES) BILL.—(No. 183.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR J. KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said, it was a small measure to remove a restriction which was very much felt by agriculturists.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I object.

Second Reading deferred till To-morrow.

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 164.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### COMMISSIONERS OF WORKS BILL. (No. 196.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

### HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 207.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

### POLICE (SLAUGHTER OF INJURED ANIMALS) BILL.—(No. 208.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 170.)

Order for Committee read, and dis charged.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

### PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.

On Motion of Sir J. T. Hibbert, Bill to grant Money for the purpose of certain Local Loans, and for other purposes relating to Local Loans, ordered to be brought in by Sir J. T. Hibbert and The Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 235.]

### NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Expenses of the Board of Trade in the execution of any Act of the present Session for providing for notice of and inquiry into Accidents occurring in certain Employments and Industries.—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

### WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, the sum of £12,117,630 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom. —(*Sir J. T. Hibbert.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again upon Wednesday.

### CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Estimate presented, — showing the several Services for which a further Vote on Account is required for the year ending 31st March 1895 [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 123.]

### GOVERNMENT PROPERTY IN THE COUNTY OF LONDON (CONTRIBUTIONS IN LIEU OF LOCAL RATES).

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 19th April; *Mr. Pickersgill*]; to lie upon the Table.

### SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented,—of Treasury Minute, dated 5th May 1894, declaring that Robert H. Maguire, Messenger, Treasury, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate, through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented,—of Report of the Commissioners for the period from 1st April 1893 to 31st March 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).

Copy presented,—of Fourth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS, 1878 to 1893.

Copy presented,—of Order, dated the 7th day of May 1894, entitled The Canadian Cattle (Slaughter and Examination) Order of 1894 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENTS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES (COMMERCIAL, No. 3, 1894).

Copy presented,—of Reports from Her Majesty's Representatives on the Organisation of Departments of Agriculture in Foreign Countries and on the nature of the Assistance rendered by the State in the Interests of Agriculture (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, Commercial, No. 24, 1889 [C. 5865]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance, No. 1353 (Trieste), and Nos. 1358 to 1375 (Equador, Spain, France, Greece, Egypt, Peru, Germany, United States, Turkey, Belgium, Italy, Russia, Dominica) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS SERIES).

Copy presented,—of Reports on Subjects of General and Commercial Interest, No. 328 (Germany) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### TREATY SERIES (No. 14, 1894).

Copy presented,—of Treaty between Great Britain and Roumania for the mutual surrender of Fugitive Criminals. Signed at Bucharest, $\frac{9}{21}$ March 1893. Ratifications exchanged at Bucharest, $\frac{1}{13}$ March 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### TREATY SERIES (No. 15, 1894).

Copy presented,—of Agreement between Great Britain and His Majesty King Leopold II., Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, relating to the Spheres of Influence of Great Britain and the Independent State of the Congo in East and Central Africa. Signed at Brussels, 12th May 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 22nd May 1894.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

### EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will consider the expediency of lessening expenditure and simplifying procedure by giving the control and management of schools to the Parish Councils about to be created under the Local Government (Scotland) Bill?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The question is raised by instructions to the Committee on the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, and the discussion on the question had better be reserved till then.

### MELTON LEVEL CROSSING.

THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called by the Melton Mowbray Local Board to the dangerous nature of the level crossing over the Melton main road to Oakham and Market Harborough at the Melton Station of the Midland Railway; whether he is aware that the Midland Railway Company now run many of their express trains over this route to London, thereby largely increasing the danger and inconvenience of this crossing; and whether he has been informed that the Midland Railway Company have been frequently memorialised on the matter, and have declined to make any alteration at the crossing; and, if so, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the facts of the case?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT, Morpeth) (who replied) said: The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to this level crossing, and they have been in communication with the Midland Railway Company on the matter. There was an inspection of this crossing in 1881 by direction of the Board of Trade, and certain works and alterations of signalling arrangements were in consequence made by the Company. They state that no accident or casualty of any kind has since occurred, and that the construction of a bridge would be by no means a simple or inexpensive matter from the engineering point of view. The crossing is an old one, made under statutory powers, and the Board have no power to compel the Company to erect a bridge.

### MR. O'KELLY OF BALTINGLASS.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any, and if so what, steps have been taken in the case of Mr. E. O'Kelly, of Baltinglass, County Wicklow?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Lord Chancellor has been in communication with that gentleman, who has promised to make a proper and valid assignment of his licensed premises at an early opportunity. Under these circumstances, the Lord Chancellor does not at present propose to take any further action in the matter.

### THE FISCAL FOR ROSS AND CROMARTY.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that Mr. Gunn, solicitor, Dingwall, who is J.P. Fiscal for Ross and Cromarty, appears as agent for applicants for licences before the Justice of the Peace and Confirming Courts; and that, on the 17th of April last, he appeared as agent before the ordinary Justice of the Peace Court for the granting of certificates on behalf of an applicant for a licence, and at this Court read a letter from the Chief Constable of Ross and Cromarty, asking him to appear in his official capacity and object to the granting of the certificate applied for, on the grounds that there had been no licence at the place referred to for some years past, and the consequence was that there had been little or no crime, and this could not be said of it while the licence was in existence; whether this method of conducting public business has the sanction of the Lord Advocate and the Secretary for Scotland; and, if not, will steps be taken to prohibit it in future?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.): I am informed that it is the fact that Mr. Gunn, who is Justice of the Peace Fiscal for the mainland of Ross and Cromarty, appeared recently in the County Licensing and Confirming Courts as agent for an applicant for an hotel licence, and that at the Licensing Court held at Dingwall on the 17th of April a letter from the Chief Constable, in the terms indicated, was read by him. Mr. Gunn states that he does not recognise the right of the Chief Constable to instruct or order him to appear in Court to oppose the granting of licences, and neither the Justices of the Peace nor the County Council have offered any objection to his appearing for clients at these Courts. The Justice of the Peace Fiscal is not a Crown official, and I am not aware of the terms of Mr. Gunn's Commission, but it would seem better that he should not appear as agent in such cases as are referred to.

## FOREIGN EXPEDITIONS ON THE NILE.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have any information as to French or Belgian Expeditions reported to be approaching Lado or other points of the Nile; and whether the whole of the Nile waterway is within the sphere of British influence?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): We have no information as to the approach of a French Expedition to Lado or other points on the Nile. An Agreement with His Majesty King Leopold, the Sovereign of the Independent State of the Congo, relating to the spheres of influence of Great Britain and the Congo State in East and Central Africa, has just been presented to Parliament, in which the hon. Member will find full details respecting the basin of the Upper Nile.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Is it in the power of the hon. Gentleman to answer the second part of the question directly? Is it not a fact that the whole of the Nile waterway is within the sphere of British influence?

SIR E. GREY: The last part of the hon. Member's question includes the whole of the Nile country, extending from Alexandria to the Victoria Nyanza. I certainly cannot answer that question in the affirmative.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: No, Sir. I do not, of course, mean Egypt, but the Nile waterway, which flows through what is known as "the Hinterland" of our Uganda and Zanzibar Protectorates; that is, practically, the equatorial provinces of the Soudan.

SIR E. GREY: The hon. Member will find that the details with regard to the upper basin of the Nile are given in the Paper which has just been laid before Parliament. I have nothing to add to the details in that statement, and I could not give them fully without referring to the Paper.

## THE LOSS OF THE "PENARTH."

MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the inquiry into the loss of the British steamship *Penarth*, where the Court found, in their opinion, that if the lead had been used between the hours of 3.30 and 4.30 a.m. the master would have been informed of his proximity to the shore, and the disaster would no doubt have been averted; if he is aware that this vessel carried 4,490 tons of cargo, and only had a crew of 25 men; that only six out of the 25 men were A.B.'s, leaving three men in each watch; and that at the time of the vessel striking the shore there was one man at the wheel and one man on the look-out, thereby only leaving one man to take the cast of the lead, which is generally a duty performed by three men in heavy weather; if, under the circumstances, seeing the ship was undermanned and the captain thus prevented from navigating the ship with proper and seamanlike care, the Board of Trade will advise that the captain's certificate be returned; and whether he will give special instructions at all future inquiries that efforts be made to get definite evidence from the witnesses as to whether the smallness of the number of men on board ship was in any way responsible for loss of the same?

MR. BURT (who replied) said: Yes, Sir. The circumstances of the case of the *Penarth* are before the Board of Trade, and will receive careful consideration, but it is doubtful whether the failure to use the lead in this instance can be accounted for by shortness of crew. In all cases of inquiry efforts are made to obtain reliable evidence with regard to the sufficiency or otherwise of the crews, and where thought desirable the special opinion of the Court is asked on the point. The facts of this case will be laid before the Committee appointed to inquire into the manning of merchant ships for its consideration.

### THE LOSS OF THE "HIGHBURY."

**MR. J. HAVELOCK WILSON**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the inquiry held into the loss of the British steamship *Highbury*, and if he is aware that the Court, in giving judgment, stated that ships of the tonnage of the *Highbury*—namely, 1,232 tons—should carry at least eight A.B.'s, in order to allow of proper reliefs for wheel and look-out; also that it was proved in evidence that at the time of the vessel striking there was no one on the look-out, and no one at the wheel but the first mate, the man who should have been engaged on these duties being then at other ship's work; and if he will direct the Marine Department of the Board of Trade to issue notices intimating to shipowners that they are held responsible under the Merchant Shipping Act for loss of life at sea caused by ships being unseaworthy?

**MR. BURT** (who replied) said: Yes, Sir. The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the case of the *Highbury*, the facts with regard to which are as stated in the question. The opinion of the Court as to the sufficiency of the crew of the ship will be placed before the Manning Committee, but it is not considered desirable at the present moment to issue any special notice to shipowners with respect to their liabilities for sending unseaworthy ships to sea.

### TRAINING SHIPS FOR SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.

**MR. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he is now in a position to state whether a training ship or training brig will be sent to Stornoway during the summer months?

**THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY** (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): Arrangements already made will prevent a training ship or brig being sent to Stornoway during the summer months, but the Western Isles will not be forgotten, and as in the past Her Majesty's ships have visited them from time to time so visits will take place in the future.

**MR. WEIR**: May I ask whether the Admiralty have any intention of sending a training ship to visit Stornoway next year?

**CAPTAIN DONELAN** (Cork, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Ireland is the only component part of the United Kingdom that does not possess a training ship; and does he not think that Queenstown has stronger claims for consideration in this respect than Stornoway?

***SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: I have only to repeat that, if it were contemplated to add any more to the number of the existing training ships, the claims of Ireland would be very carefully considered, and I can assure the hon. and gallant Member that the claims of that country are not forgotten at the Admiralty. In answer to the hon. Member, I have to say that training ships are stationary and do not go about the coast. The training squadron visits different parts of the coast, and I do not exclude the possibility of visits to Stornoway.

**CAPTAIN DONELAN**: May I suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that even a temporary training brig would be better than nothing?

**MR. SPEAKER**: Order, order!

### THE ROYAL COLONIAL INSTITUTE AND THE NEW ESTATE DUTY.

**SIR G. BADEN-POWELL** (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received a Memorial from the Council of the Royal Colonial Institute in reference to the proposed levying of the new Estate Duty on property situate out of the United Kingdom; and, if so, whether he can lay a copy of the said Memorial upon the Table of the House, together with a copy of any reply he has made thereto?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I have received the Memorial referred to, and have acknowledged its receipt. I see no reason for laying this particular Memorial on the Table of the House. I have received, at the same time, a Paper from a body which calls itself the Imperial Federation Defence Committee, setting forth the inadequacy of the contribution of the colonies to the defence of the Empire and its commerce, in which they state that—

> "The Navy employed and relied upon for the protection of the whole Empire is provided and maintained entirely at the cost of the people of the United Kingdom, though there are 11,000,000 people of the same race inhabiting some of the richest countries of the world, under the same Sovereign and enjoying the same privileges, who contribute practically nothing to that expenditure. It is for the people of the United Kingdom to call upon their own Government to afford to their countrymen in the colonies the opportunity of taking their just share in the cost and in the administration of the finest defensive force in the world. This is an offer which no Englishman need object to make."

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he entirely concurs with the statement which he has read?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I have very great sympathy with it.

**Mr. GIBSON BOWLES** (Lynn Regis): The Estate Duty does not also apply to estates in other countries under different Sovereigns?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: If the hon. Member will take the trouble to read the Bill he will see that it does not so apply.

### THE GRESHAM COMMISSION.

**Sir A. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the evidence taken before the Gresham (London University) Commission will be printed; and whether the very great inconvenience of the want of this during the discussion of the London University question is fully realised?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**; The evidence has been printed, and is now before the Commissioners for revision.

### EXPENSES OF NAVAL LAUNCHING.

**Mr. A. C. MORTON** (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will give details of the items of expenditure, Navy Vote 11 (1892-3), Sub-head Z (Miscellaneous Payments and Allowances), expenses incurred on account of Her Majesty and the Royal Household £1,239 11s. 4d., and expenses of ceremonies attendant on the launching of Her Majesty's ships, amount not stated?

***Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: The following statement gives details of the expenditure under Navy Vote 11, 1892-3, for expenses incurred on account of Her Majesty and the Royal Household, and on account of ceremonies attendant on the launching of Her Majesty's ships:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Conveyance of the Queen's servants, carriages, and horses, and baggage to and from Scotland by sea ... ... ... | £255 | 5 | 6 |
| Similar conveyance to and from Isle of Wight ... ... ... | 777 | 9 | 6 |
| Outlay at Portsmouth, &c., consequent on the landing there of Her Majesty and the Royal Family ... ... ... ... | 206 | 16 | 4 |
| | £1,239 | 11 | 4 |
| Launching expenses, including launching booths and allowances to choirs and bandsmen | £65 | 8 | 7 |

### IRISH EDUCATION ACT.

**Mr. JACKSON** (Leeds, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state, as regards the 46 places in which the Irish Education Act of 1892 has been put into force by the appointment of school attendance officers, for the three months ending 31st March in the years 1892, 1893, and 1894, respectively, the number of children on the rolls, the number in average attendance, the percentage of average attendance; and the like information as regards the total of the other schools in Ireland during the same periods?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The numbers for the 46 places are as follows:—The number of pupils on the rolls for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, was 87,311; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 93,846; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 97,932. The number of pupils in average daily attendance for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, was 51,515; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 59,014; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 65,376. The percentage of pupils in average daily attendance to the number of pupils on the rolls was for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, 59; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 62·9; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 66·8. The numbers for the remaining 72 places to which the Act applies, but in which up to March 31, 1894, school attendance officers had not been appointed, are as follows:—The number of pupils on the rolls for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, was 101,231; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 105,957; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 106,661. The number of pupils in average daily attendance for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, was 56,518; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 65,491; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 64,919. The percentage of pupils in average daily attendance to the number of pupils on the rolls for the quarter ended March 31, 1892, was 55·8; for the quarter ended March 31, 1893, 61·8; for the quarter ended March 31, 1894, 60·9. The Commissioners of National Education are unable, in view of the great pressure of the business in their Department at present, to supply similar information as regards the total of the other schools in Ireland. Besides, the collection and preparation of information in such an extensive form would take much time and involve considerable expense, and, under these circumstances, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will not press for the information indicated in the conclusion of the question.

Mr. JACKSON: I should like to explain that my object is to ascertain whether, where the Act has been put into operation, there has been an improvement in the attendance at the schools as compared with the general condition of Ireland. I will put down another question the object of which will be to ascertain the average percentage of attendance in all schools in Ireland.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: In how many places is the Act not operative? Does the right hon. Gentleman intend this Session to introduce a Bill dealing with the subject?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Act affects 118 places, and it has been put in force in 46. I have a Bill ready, and on Thursday I propose to ask for leave to introduce it.

## MANORIAL RIGHTS AND THE RATES.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether manors and manorial rights, with their profits of chief rents, heriots, and other privileges, are usually assessed to the poor and other rates; and, if not, will he cause a Circular to be sent to Clerks of Assessment Committees, calling their attention to the need of the annual value of all manors and manorial rights being in future included in the valuation lists?

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I am advised that manors and manorial rights, with their profits of chief rents, heriots, and other privileges, are not by law rateable to the poor rate, and I cannot, therefore, issue a Circular to Assessment Committees as suggested.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman bring in a Bill to make the properties rateable or assessable in cases in which an income is undoubtedly derived from them?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE was understood to reply that the question was a wide one, and if raised at all it would necessitate dealing with the whole subject.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Surely the right hon. Gentleman is aware that rents are received, for instance, from the shootings on these properties?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I can only repeat that the question is a very important one, and I can add nothing to the answer I have already given.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is aware that ground rents are rated?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Yes.

## THE TREES IN HYDE PARK.

Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he can explain what was the need for the recent cutting of great trees in Hyde Park near Albert Gate Mansions and Wellington Court; and whether it is intended to cut the remainder of the beautiful trees in the same line between the two sets of flats named?

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. H. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The removal of about five trees near Albert Gate Mansions was sanctioned by my predecessors, and carried out before I came into Office. The condition of the removal was an annual contribution to the maintenance of some flower-beds, which were thought to be more appropriate than the trees, which were very close to the houses. The branches of two other trees standing a few feet from Wellington Court had to be lopped to allow the building to be erected, and as they were no better than bare poles, I have had them cut down. I have no intention of removing any others.

### CORDITE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War from what sources, if any, except Waltham Factory, cordite has been supplied to the Services; whether any private manufacturers are under contract to supply it to them; and how long a time is expected to elapse before it can be again supplied by the Waltham Factory?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): Cordite has not been supplied to the Services from any other source than Waltham Abbey. No private manufacturers are under contract to supply it, but offers are about to be invited. It is expected that it will be two months before Waltham Abbey is able to resume full work, but it will probably be possible to make temporary arrangements for the manufacture of cordite much sooner.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.
(No. 202.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

*SIR C. PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities) said, he could not complain of the right hon. Gentleman having dispensed with the opportunity of stating his views upon the Second Reading of this measure, seeing that they had from him a very full and satisfactory statement upon the occasion of its introduction, but at the same time there had been since that date opportunities of consulting and of ascertaining the opinions of persons and bodies in Scotland which might, to some extent, either have modified or might ultimately modify the views which were then expressed. At this stage he should carefully refrain from doing anything but adverting in very general terms to the views which he was disposed to entertain of this scheme for local government which had been submitted to the House. There were certain matters which were not in the Bill, and as to which there was in Scotland a body of opinion with reference to the question whether they ought to have been in or not. Conspicuous among these was the question whether the matter of education might not at some early date be swept into the scheme of local government which had been shadowed forth in the Bill? On that he did not consider it right or fitting at this stage to say anything at all either way on the question of policy. There must be very great difficulties in the way of anyone who proposed such a change, such as the religious difficulty which would confront them at once when they came to touch the cumulative vote, which would have to be touched if that change were made. There would also be other difficulties, some, perhaps, of a purely official kind and others of administration; but, still more, he believed there would be difficulties with regard to the areas both of rating and administration. The change would involve, to a large extent, a readjustment of areas which would give rise to very subtle and serious difficulties. Therefore, without expressing any opinion with regard to the policy of the matter, he contented himself by saying that if and when that was proposed it would be a subject of grave consideration both as to matters of inconvenience, and also the larger question of policy. There were other matters not in this Bill such as the enlargement of the powers of Local Bodies in the direction in which the powers of Town Councils had been enlarged in recent years. He referred to such questions as what was called the Dean of Guild jurisdiction. That was a very important question, but one which was ready to hand if and when it was considered desirable to add that to the jurisdictions either of the new bodies or the bodies created in recent years. And, therefore, neither on that nor the other question which had been shadowed forth in the instructions on the Paper—namely, the bringing of lunacy administration into the sphere of either the new bodies or the County Council—did he think it necessary to animadvert on their absence from the Bill. He assumed the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind the possibility of local government for Scotland following in some respects the example of local government elsewhere, and he thought he was right in saying that in England and Ireland there had been an addition from time to time of further powers to the Boards created years ago when Parliament thought it right to confer them. In the very forefront of the Bill now before the House one met with a very great change indeed, which was not so immediately connected with what was commonly known as local government as the remainder of the Bill, but which amounted in one aspect of it to a very grave departmental change in the administration of that class of business over the country. He said in one aspect of it, because, undoubtedly, there was another aspect of the question in which this change consisted of nothing more than adding to the Board a head directly responsible to Parliament. He should in a very few moments examine the position of that question which, to his mind, was as important a one for the future success of local government in Scotland as any which the Bill raised. He was aware that it was rather a question of a technical description. He approached it, he believed, as he did other branches of the Bill, without the slightest bias in either direction, and he believed that remark would be accepted on both sides, notwithstanding the fact that he was for the space of nearly three years, in various capacities, a member of the existing Board of Supervision. For two years he had the honour of a seat on the Board as being the Sheriff of counties, and for the third year as holding the office of Solicitor General for Scotland. The first thing that struck a Scotchman about the Board of Supervision, as compared with the analogous Boards in other countries which had been placed under a Local Government Board somewhat like that now proposed, was the exceeding cheapness of Scottish administration hitherto. In the matter of salaries the Scottish administration was, he believed, something under £8,000 a year, whereas in Ireland a similar Board cost £25,000 a year, and in England over £100,000 a year. That was a fact which might seem to call urgently in the mind of Scotchmen for reform if on no other ground, but he was not able to say at this moment that the Board now proposed would alter that state of matters. Whether the new Board would be more or less expensive than the present Board or not, it was certain that in various important particulars it could not be more successful in its results than the present administration under the Board of Supervision had been. Among all the criticisms and animadversions made about the Board of Supervision and its *personnel*, he had never heard any criticism adversely directed to the results of the working of the Board over a long series of years, especially under its Poor Law administration. He was aware that objections had been taken to it from various quarters of the country, and that there had been complaints from small Local Bodies who had felt as if the Board were disregarding their representative character, and forcing schemes upon them that they thought they could do better without. He considered that was rather a compliment to the Board of Supervision, and showed that in these particulars it was doing its duty, and in so doing its duty it had in every case been supported in the Supreme Court to which the Statute gave it leave to submit the matter. The Secretary for Scotland most justly paid his tribute to the persons who had long been the official members of that Board, but he did not say—what he had hoped and expected the right hon. Gentleman would say—anything in favour of the results which that Board had brought about especially in the Poor Law administration of Scotland. This was not the moment for enlarging upon the subject; but anyone acquainted with the matter would be quite ready to say that that Board, cheaply as it was worked and constituted, had done noble work in the past—ever since the passage of the Poor Law Act of 1845—and had brought the Poor Law of Scotland to a state which, whether regarded from the point of view of pauperism or from the larger point of view of social administration would compare favourably with that of any other country under the Crown. They were told that this must be changed, and it was worth while to examine the ground on which the change was sought, because he was not quite sure he was at one with the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the exact position of the Board at the present moment. The Secretary for Scotland told them in introducing the Bill that the Board of Supervision was neither bound to supply him with information nor was it bound to carry out the policy of the Government, and, therefore, that it was necessary to introduce in a double sense the new responsibility sought to be introduced in this Bill—in the first place, by making the Board of Supervision directly responsible to the Scotch Office, and, in the second place, by giving it a head who should be directly responsible to Parliament. He believed he was strictly correct in saying that both in theory and in fact the Board of Supervision regarded itself, and had always been regarded, as practically one of the departments of the Scotch Office. Until the Secretary for Scotland's Office was created a few years ago it was in point of location under the Office of the Secretary of State for the Home Department in England, and it was during that period of its existence that a certain Commission sat in Scotland known as the Camperdown Commission, about 20 years ago, at which the question came up as to the relation of the Board of Supervision to the Department of State and in particular to the Home Office where it had its local habitation. The Chairman of the Board, an able man who had since been retired from the Chairmanship, Sir William Walker, was asked to what authority the Board of Supervision was responsible, to which he answered—

> "To the Home Secretary. The Statute expressly requires us to make an annual Report to him, and I imagine that as one of the Civil Departments of the State we are under his control in all respects. Any person or Board who may be of opinion that we fail in our duty or exceed our power is entitled to appeal to the Home Secretary, who would make inquiry into the matter and give us directions."

He need not say in that particular the Secretary for Scotland held exactly the position which the Home Secretary held before. The answer of Sir W. Walker seemed to convey a very accurate impression of the relation which existed between the Board of Supervision and the Department in London at the present time. If that were so one-half of the Secretary for Scotland's suggested reasons for the change which he proposed was cut away, because he did not give them any instance—and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman could—either of information being refused by the Board of Supervision or of a refusal by the Board to follow the policy of the Government of the day. If the Board of Supervision had declined in any particular to do so he should, at all events, have expected that that would have been assigned as a reason for this change, and until he heard the contrary he should assume what he believed was accurate—that was, that such a thing never happened. If this alteration was to be made he agreed that there was a fitness in the Secretary for Scotland being the head of the new Board, or whatever it might be called. At the same time, he was not prepared to admit that there would be any more direct responsibility to Parliament on the part of that Minister afterwards than there was at the present moment, and one of the things it occurred to him to ask under the new *régime* was what difference there would be in the Board of Supervision itself in its ordinary administration. He was well aware that they must proceed to constitute the Local Government Board on one of two totally distinct principles, and he thought the Bill had selected the right alternative in making the new Board rather an official than a representative Board. These were two quite distinct alternatives, and there was a good deal to be said for each, but he thought there was far more to be said for the choice made in the Bill than for any representative Board—that was representative in the sense of having a representative element in it. One question he desired to ask, and the answer to which was of some importance, was—Was the proposed Board likely to be stronger or weaker than the present one? In his opening speech the Secretary for Scotland seemed to speak of the Board he proposed as having an outer and an inner circle, the outer to embrace the proposed six members, and the inner—of which he thought at least the right hon. Gentleman would have been a member himself—to embrace the three Edinburgh Members, a most remarkable metaphor to use with reference to a Board which was to be under a responsible Minister, and which, although its local habitation was to be in Edinburgh, was yet to be supplemented and strengthened by the addition of three members, who would represent what he might call the Dover House influence. The answer to the question whether this would be a stronger or weaker Board than the present would depend a great deal upon how it was worked. The Secretary for Scotland seemed to object to the composition of the present Board of Supervision because of the presence of so many lawyers upon it. With reference to that feature he would say this: that since the Board was instituted in 1845 there had been, at all events, one very considerable change in the *personnel* of the Board. The Solicitor General for Scotland in 1845 and for many years afterwards was not a Member of this House, but for a good many years past he had been a Member of the House, and the change which that brought about in the Board of Supervision was that the legal membership, which was originally fixed at four, for the practical purposes of administration now stood at three, being the Sheriffs of counties. In the second place, let him point out that these counties were selected on a very intelligible principle. One represented the interests of the Highlands, another had great centres of population in it like Renfrew, and the third was the County of Perth, which was mainly agricultural and pastoral. Moreover, the Sheriff of each county was supposed not merely to be in touch with the interests of the county of which he was Sheriff, but he must have had the benefit of a legal training before he could attain to the position of Sheriff, which training would tend to make him a capable administrator in the larger sense. He might be told that experts ought to be rather the servants than members of the Board, but a large proportion of the questions which came before the Board of Supervision of any importance at all outside the ordinary administrative matters, were questions of a *quasi*-legal nature. Sometimes they were questions of the construction of a Statute; sometimes extremely delicate questions as to the weight of evidence, and in some cases not merely had the lawyers on the Board to exercise their legal acumen on such questions as these, but there was also a very important judicial element required for the decision of cases eminently judicial in their character, such, for instance, as the dismissal or retention of the services of Inspectors, and things of that sort. He said at once that he was jealous of the change being so drastic as it was in the composition of the new Board in this respect. The difference was very great, and even greater than it looked, because one of the two who were to be retained was the Solicitor General for Scotland, who, owing to his Parliamentary duties, would very seldom be able to attend the weekly meetings of the Board in Edinburgh. There was a Return presented last year which showed the attendance of the various members of the Board of Supervision during the last four or five years, and that Return was interesting in more than one respect. Something had been said in some of the papers with reference to the benefit which such Board would derive from the presence on it of, it might be, *ex officio*, but still representative, men, such as the Lord Provosts of large towns. That Return showed that the Lord Provost of Glasgow—no doubt through no fault of his own—who was an *ex officio* member, did not put in a single attendance during the whole of these years; and the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, who was another *ex officio* member, and more nearly on the spot than the other gentleman, put in a very small attendance indeed. The attendance put in by the Sheriffs of the three counties largely predominated over that of any other members of the Board. He was quite aware that that laid him open to the remark that the Board was managed mainly by these gentlemen in combination with the Chairman, but that, to his mind, went to show two things: In the first place, that the legal element was of great advantage as operating towards the good results which had undeniably been obtained by the present Board; and, in the second place, as showing that in point of fact a large number of questions came before it which were questions that ought to be decided by legal minds. To sum up this part of the Bill, it seemed to him that in the absence of the Solicitor General in London, during the long Parliamentary Sessions to which they were now accustomed, this most important department of the Board's work would be pronounced upon by a single legal mind, and that to him was not satisfactory. This was not a class of questions which ought to be submitted to the decision of a single mind, and he hoped that hereafter the Government would consent to an alteration of their scheme in this regard. He should like to make one other remark, as to the presence of a medical expert upon the Board. He thought it would be found, when the sense of Scotland and of those more interested in this Bill was taken, there would be very grave doubts indeed as to the wisdom of such a proposal. The presence of a single expert was likely to result in his becoming sovereign in all matters in which he was an expert. Such a plan did not tend to promote wise administration and did tend to put the expert in a false position, for he ought to advise the Board as a colleague, but would infallibly advise them as an expert. Questions which ought to be dealt with by the Board as men of affairs without bias would probably be decided in practice by the expert. Members of the medical profession, he was inclined to think, would far rather have their conduct judged by a Board which would view the matter from an unbiased point of view instead of a Board swayed, as they necessarily and naturally would be swayed, in making up their minds on delicate matters of conduct of local medical officers throughout the country by the opinion of the medical member of the Board. He believed in that particular alone there would be a strong feeling against this gentleman being a member of the Board. There was no such corresponding member of the English Board, and although there was one in the Irish Board, he rather thought, historically, there was sufficient reason for that which did not apply to Scotland. In the Act instituting a Local Government Board for Ireland there were reasons connected with the Medical Charities Act in Ireland which probably were sufficient to suggest that the medical officer, who at that time was the administrative officer under the Act, should simply be assumed as a member of the Board for the continuance of his duties under the Statute. The proposed Board would be weaker or stronger than the present Board according to the interpretation put upon its construction by the Secretary for Scotland, who filled the functions in Scotland filled by the President of the Local Government Board in England. But there seemed to him to be a sharp distinction between the two positions. He thought it was the right hon. Gentleman who said that practically the Local Government Board for England was the President. The Local Government Board in England consisted of the Lord President of the Council, the four principal Secretaries of State, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He should like to know how many of the right hon. Gentlemen were aware of the honourable functions they held in the Local Government Board and how often they met? He did not wonder that in a Board so constituted the President was the Board, and worked through officials on his own responsibility, except on great questions of policy which would be submitted to the Cabinet. If the Secretary for Scotland were to assume that position with regard to the new Board, then he was afraid that while the Board in that sense would be much stronger than it was at present, yet it would be a step in the direction of concentration, and of withdrawing the control of these matters away from Scotland. In that respect he should be jealous of it, and, apart altogether from personal considerations, it would be a pity if that were the result. [Sir G. TREVELYAN: Hear, hear!] He supposed the right hon. Gentleman thought that would be a pity too, and that the change would have the other effect. The right hon. Gentleman, he assumed, meant the three members of the Board in Edinburgh to be the inner circle, and the members in London to be a ring round them as the outer circle. If that were so, then he said the Board would be much weaker than the present Board. He had said enough to show that the analogy of England really afforded no analogy at all. He did not think, either, that the analogy of Ireland was very helpful, and for this reason: As he understood it, the Chief Secretary, attending to his work in London, was not in the habit of attending meetings in Dublin, though he would probably be referred to in questions of importance. The second member of the Board now proposed for Scotland was the Under Secretary for Scotland, and the third was the Solicitor General for Scotland. Take the present *régime*. If he was not wrong, the Under Secretary for Ireland was a Dublin, and not a London, official; and the Solicitor General for Ireland, at all events for a year or two past, had not been a Member of this House, and, therefore, might be regarded as a Dublin official too; so that the Local Government Board for Ireland had had the advantage in Dublin of having what the right hon. Gentleman would call these two distinguished members of the outer circle to aid them. It might, therefore, be true that in Ireland the Board as at present constituted was a strong Board and not subject to the observation he was going to make on the Board for Scotland. But if there was anything in the right hon. Gentleman's renunciation of the idea that he, under the proposal, would hold the place of the President of the Local Government Board for England, if there was anything in the idea that the inner circle would really work the Board from year's end to year's end, then the result would be that the Board would practically be composed of a President, a Sheriff, and a medical practitioner, and they would form a weaker Board than the present. The only other alternative was that the real head of the Board should be the Secretary for Scotland, and in adopting it they were submitting to a great act of centralization. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman had an open mind on the question, for Amendments might be introduced by which the proposed Board could be made more workable and more Scotch than it was likely to be under the present proposals. The second and third parts of the Bill dealt with Parish Councils and with the supersession of the Parochial Boards. That at once, as did everything which touched alteration in the Poor Law and its administration, raised points of extreme interest and importance. It might be that those Boards stood in need of reform. At present their electorate and membership were very curious and complex. Partly, they were not elected at all, and, of course, everyone knew that, historically speaking, the reason for the complexity of the present Parochial Boards was that down to 1845 the care of the poor in Scotland was an ecclesiastical matter; and when, for social reasons, the Parochial Boards were established, a considerable representation was given to the Church because of the obligation which continued upon her of contributing large sums to the relief of the poor. If the Church was to be relieved of the advantage of that representation on the Boards, equity might require that the obligation should be discontinued also. A more important matter which was raised by these two parts of the Bill was this: At the present moment the membership of the Parochial Boards was, to a considerable extent, composed of owners of £20 and upwards. It appeared to him that if the composition of the Boards was altered, naturally the subject-matter with which they had to deal must be taken into account; and it would become necessary to see that their Poor Law administration did not fall under that greatest of all calamities—namely, that it did not fall into the hands of persons who had neither sufficient interest in economy nor were sufficiently removed from the unfortunate class who fell under that administration to be totally above the sway of feelings which, though highly proper and natural, in point of fact did not tend to the propriety of administration. There were two safeguards in this connection, one or other of which ought, he thought, to be regarded in any such change. Either the area of administration should be enlarged, or the electorate and composition of the Board should be such as to afford security against the danger to which he had just alluded. In 1889, as an adjunct to the Local Government measures of the late Government, there was a Bill introduced for the amendment of the constitution of the Parochial Boards. It was proposed by that Bill that the number composing the Parochial Board should be fixed by the Board of Supervision in relation to the valuation of the parish and other circumstances. In burghs it was proposed that the municipal electors should have a franchise for the Parochial Boards, but so many of them as were owners qualified to vote were put in a separate column. In the same way in the landward parish there were the County Council voters, but there was to be the same distinction between the ordinary voters in one column and the owners in another, and it was proposed that the Parochial Board should be elected one-half by the owners, and one-half by the occupiers. That pointed in a direction which he thought was a safe direction. It appeared to him that unless they had something of that kind, they ran very great risk of having the administration of the Poor Law made, not only much more burdensome, but open—it might be through the exercise of perfectly natural and legitimate feelings—to very grave abuses. That would be so even if there were no other change proposed by the Government; but in view of the other changes which they were proposing, it appeared to him that this was a question of the greatest gravity. Was the right hon. Gentleman aware that according to one reading of this Bill the rating qualification was abolished, even with respect to the membership of the Parish Council? Was that the intention of the Government or not? There were two totally distinct aspects of this question of rating qualification. The rating might be imposed as a condition upon the electorate. Opinions might differ as to the propriety of doing that, but he was not aware that opinions differed as to the propriety of imposing a rating qualification upon the membership of the body that was to administer the rate. This question came up in the discussions on the Local Government Bill of 1889. There, it might be remembered, there was a double disqualification of voters. They were not entitled to vote for the County Councils if they were in arrear either of poor rate or county rates. They had been reminded that the Scottish Members, by a majority, thought there ought to be no such disqualification with regard to poor rates in connection with County Council elections, because County Councils did not administer the Poor Law. A sharp distinction was drawn in those discussions, on both sides of the House, between default in the poor rate and default in the county rate as disqualifying even for the electorate. But what would be said if it was the intention of the Government—and he had not yet got a negative from the right hon. Gentleman—to abolish not merely the rating qualification as regarded the electorate, but also as regarded the membership of the Parish Council? In 1889 that question came up, and the present Secretary for War, who intervened in a very interesting manner occasionally in the Debates of that year, speaking on the 12th of July, 1889, said rhetorically, but, as the context showed, meaning thereby the strongest possible negative—

> "Are we to allow a man to be elected on the Council who has himself failed to pay the very rates which he is called upon to administer?"

He should like to know if there was any answer to that question, which had never been answered yet? It was answered in a very emphatic way by the House on the occasion to which he alluded, and the objections to it were so many and so obvious that he could not conceive the Government, whatever their view might be of the rating qualification for the electorate, would desire to extend the doctrine as far as that. But even upon the lower ground he and his friends took the strongest possible objection to the abolition of the rating qualification as regarded the body who were to elect the administrators of the Poor Law. It seemed to him—and, he believed, to a good many others—that such a proposal was utterly indefensible in principle, not merely on the general ground that he who neglected his duties as a citizen was not entitled to participate directly or indirectly in such matters, but also on the special ground that, if there was one department more than another in which such a doctrine was dangerous, it was the department charged with the administration of the Poor Law. He, therefore, hoped that this also was a matter in which the Government would have an open mind, and would be willing to hear and consider arguments against the proposals of the Bill if he had interpreted them aright. Passing to Part IV. of the Bill, he confessed he had read that part with some anxiety, because it did not appear to him to be a practical way of solving the difficulties attending the position of the new Councils it was proposed to create. The position of the burghs, in the first place, would have to be most carefully attended to. It seemed to him that the burghs would be in a most curious position under this part of the Bill, and especially so with relation to the duties and powers of what was called the Landward Committee in the case of a burghal landward parish. He could not well understand what the genesis of this Landward Committee was intended to be, because it seemed to him the framers of the Bill had gone out of their way to add friction to the working of the machinery of this part. Instead of themselves setting up a committee composed of the landward members, they made the parish go through the form of appointing a Landward Committee, although they meant that the selection should be limited to the landward members of the parish and should embrace them all. He could not understand why this extraordinary ceremony should be gone through, and what underlay it. The position of the parish, as a whole, whether landward or non-landward, as regarded the existing bodies, was still more mysterious, and he thought the relation in point of power and duty of the Parish Council to the two larger bodies was such as to lead to the most serious inconvenience. The position of the Landward Committee was most singular. There were between 230 and 240 parishes in Scotland in which there would be a Landward Committee—that was parishes which were partly landward only, and to which Section 23 would apply. It was not obvious from a perusal of this part of the Bill what the powers of that Landward Committee was to be, and what its relation to the rest of the parish. Sub-section (e) of Section 24 said—

> "For the foregoing purposes the Committee have power to accept and hold any property for the benefit of the parish."

He assumed that would be for the benefit of the landward part. He urged that it should be made plainer what was to be the position of the Parish Councils. As to the important question of rating, it did seem to him that the reasons the Secretary for Scotland gave for imposing no maximum of rating in this Bill were totally inadequate. The Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 was discussed and passed upon the footing that a 9d. rate would be, if not excessive, at all events, the maximum rate for education, and yet they had had parishes where the education rate had reached as high a sum as 5s. and 6s in the £1. He had heard it stated that if this House had had the smallest conception that there was a possibility of the education rate reaching such a figure they would either never have passed the Education Act or else have imposed a limit; and if a limit had been imposed he ventured to say it would have been 9d., or something like it. With that example staring him in the face why was it that the Secretary for Scotland said he was not going to impose any limit on rating? The right hon. Gentleman positively said he did so on the opposite ground, that it would be a temptation to bodies to work up to the maximum. The right hon. Gentleman had given instances to show that 2½d. or 3d. would be the average, and said that to put in a limit of 6d. would be to tempt the Local Authority to go up to that maximum. That was a specious argument, but it was absolutely worthless as an argument against putting some maximum into the Bill. If the Government thought 6d. too much, let them put in 3d. or some other figure; but do not let them have no limit as to rating power with the example of the education rating in Scotland staring them in the face. The Secretary for Scotland appeared to him to have sought to justify his proposals by picturing the operation of the Bill in those parts of Scotland where it would operate with least friction. But that was not the mode or the spirit in which the local government legislation of 1889 was passed. For when passing that Act for the whole of Scotland they tested its propriety, not by considering where it would work with least friction and most cheaply, but by the test of those places where it would work with most friction and the least cheaply. Viewed from that point of view, the present proposals of the Government were open to grave criticism and animadversion. Another provision eminently open to objection was the proposal to do away with the Standing Joint Committee, and to substitute for that body either nothing at all or, of all things in the world, the Finance Committee of the County Council. In some districts the Standing Joint Committee had proved a most valuable safeguard. He might be told that the connection between the Standing Joint Committee and the police was one to which the majority of the Scottish Members were opposed in 1889, but it stood in the Act of 1889, and it had worked exceedingly well. With one local exception, he was not aware that the Standing Joint Committee had ever been behindhand in the view of the responsible authorities in doing what was necessary for ensuring the peace of the country. That exception was in the Airdens case, and it demonstrated that the action of the Standing Joint Committee would not necessarily be always in one direction. In that case the Sheriff, who was responsible for the peace of the county, said he could not be responsible for the peace or for the running of the Queen's Writ, unless he got aid from outside, and it was refused. He thought it would be found that the more they looked into the matter the more important was the work imposed on that committee as regarded the control of the police. But the committee had another important function—control of the capital expenditure and of the borrowing powers of the county. Why were these functions imposed on the Standing Joint Committee? Hon. Members would recollect that prior to the legislation of 1889 there were owners' rates, and that it was then proposed to levy the rates partly on owner and partly on occupier in the future. But to save the incidence of existing taxes, the stereotyped rate, as it was called, was set up, and the owners were held as bound to continue to pay their stereotyped rates, and only the additional rate required was to be halved between owner and occupier. If, however, they were to do away with the Standing Joint Committee's control of the expenditure, then, in point of equity, it would be necessary to reconsider that stereotyped rate. If they deprived the owners of land of the check they had had on the expenditure, a re-arrangement of those rates would be absolutely necessary in the interests of justice. The Government would do well to reconsider their position with regard to this section, and they would do well to abandon or greatly modify what seemed to him to be one of the most contentious proposals in the Bill. There were many other details which he might refer to, but these were the main features which struck him as open to criticism, and in some respects to grave animadversion. He would look with interest to the discussion as it developed, and in particular to the spirit in which the Government would meet the objections urged from his side of the House. If they were met in a fair spirit, the Bill might be made a good working measure; but he was very much afraid that if the Government did not see their way to meet them in that spirit, so far from the measure being welcomed by all, it might prove to be a very controversial one in this House, and one that would be of very doubtful benefit to the country.

Mr. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) said, there was at least one matter in which he found himself able to agree with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and that was that the Bill was capable of considerable improvement. He made that admission with all the more freedom because his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland, when introducing the Bill, said he hoped that when it got into Committee it might be further improved and made a very serviceable measure. The Bill proposed one much-needed reform which would make it a measure of considerable importance if it contained nothing else. He alluded to the reform of the constitution of Local Boards. He believed that when the manner in which that question was dealt with in the Bill was fully recognised in the country, the Bill would excite greater interest and a more enthusiastic support than perhaps it had yet evoked. He attributed the want of interest in the Bill to two causes. One cause, which was inevitable, was that the great length of the Bill repelled readers, though notwithstanding its length it was really a very clearly-drafted measure. But there was a graver cause, and that was that the Bill left undone a great many things which it certainly ought to do, and possibly to some extent did things it ought not to do. But the reform of the Local Boards was a very urgent measure. It had been called for for a very long time, and there could be no question whatever that it was now ripe for settlement. He therefore heard with disappointment the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh University that he objected to the Parliamentary franchise being made the basis of the constitution of the Parochial Boards. He doubted whether the right hon. Gentleman would be supported in that objection by his Party in the country. The next most important provision of the Bill was the reform of the constitution of the Board of Supervision. That also had become an urgent question in Scotland. He was a good deal surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh University maintain that Parliamentary control was applied to the Board under its present constitution. Unless he was greatly mistaken, that was an erroneous idea. It was perfectly true that the work of the Board was admirably done. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had said a word too much as to the excellence of the achievements of the Board, and particularly as to the point of perfection to which the administration of the Poor Law had been brought. He would add that the Board had co-operated with perfect loyalty in some things with the officials of the Scotch Office, and that it had rendered the most useful assistance to Ministers of very different opinions in the development of policies of very opposite tendencies. But it was also true that the Board had consistently maintained and asserted that it was not bound to comply with the directions of the Parliamentary head, and instances had occurred quite recently—one of them of great importance—in which the Board stated most courteously but distinctly that it was their bounden duty to form and act on their own opinion, and that they were unable to surrender it to the opinion of the Parliamentary Chief. The Board's view of their legal position was not necessarily correct. When a Civil Service Department was bound to report to a particular Parliamentary Chief, that fact indicated that it must be under some subordination to him. The Board of Supervision, however, took an opposite view, and that was one of the principal reasons why a change was necessary. But it was not the only reason. Another reason was that the peculiar and somewhat anomalous and antiquated constitution of the Board had always exposed it to a deal of unpopularity which it did not deserve, and deprived it of the confidence to which its general administration well entitled it. The constitution of the Board had been repeatedly the subject of Parliamentary attack. In 1868 there was the Committee which sat on the administration of the Poor Law, and there was afterwards the Camperdown Commission, and both of those inquiries originated in the Parliamentary attacks on the administration of the Board of Supervision; but it was only just to say that out of both of those inquiries the Board came most triumphantly. But the reason why the Board was liable to such suspicion and attack was in the nature of their constitution, which was neither representative on the one hand, nor, in the Parliamentary sense, official on the other. As to the plan proposed in the Bill, he thought it would well deserve the careful attention of the House before it passed. He did not say that he was dissatisfied with it, and certainly it was not open to the strongest criticism made on it from the outside—namely, that what the Board proposed was not sufficiently representative. All that he was doubtful about was whether the form of the Board was the best form to employ. The first object they should aim at was to get someone directly responsible to the House for the administration of the Board. That was accomplished, but accomplished in a very peculiar manner. There were three gentlemen appointed to do the ordinary work, and there were three *ex officio* members, including the Secretary for Scotland himself, besides. The three appointed members were to hold their offices during pleasure. Consequently, the Secretary for Scotland could dismiss them at a moment's notice. If that were not so they might out-vote the right hon. Gentleman; but under the Bill, if they did out-vote the right hon. Gentleman, he could turn them out-of-doors the next day. That being so, the question arose whether it would not be better to have the same arrangement as existed in the Local Government Board of England—a number of medical and legal gentlemen as expert advisers to the Board, but without any representative capacity on the Board. At the same time, considering the geographical situation, just as in the case of Ireland, it might be very convenient to have the Board in Edinburgh, while the Parliamentary Chief was in London. There was one other matter of importance in the Bill to which he wished to refer, and that was the proposal to abolish the Joint Standing Committee. He strongly approved of that proposal. When they gave every Town Council control of their police, he was unable to see why County Councils should not have similar powers. He came now to the points in which he considered the Bill to be defective in regard to omissions. It appeared to him that they might apply to the Bill two canons of criticism. He did not think a Local Government Bill was complete that did not provide that there should be one complete system—and only one system—of local government in the counties. He mentioned the counties instead of the burghs, because for many years burgh administration had been developed to a much higher point of perfection than county administration. The view they should take about local government in counties was that there ought to be one systematic idea running through the whole arrangements in the county, from the County Council down to the District Committees and the Parish Councils; that there ought to be one system covering all the work that was to be done within the county. The second requirement he would make of the Bill was that it should be to a certain extent an Omnibus Bill. Their experience of the working of the Act of 1889 showed them that it had grave defects; and the present Bill was shirking and evading its own purpose if it did not pick up the most important of these defects. It was in that sense he wished the Bill to be an Omnibus Bill. The first omission of the Bill was that the charge of education was not entrusted to the Parish Councils. That omission sinned against the first canon he had laid down: because they could not have a complete system of local government in a county—they could not have one body doing all that was necessary in one area if they left an extraneous body like the School Board in a parish doing one of the principal parts of the work which the parish required to be done. There should not be a multiplicity of bodies. There should be one system doing all the work. Again, the multiplication of elections was an evil. Interest in elections to public offices excited in moderation a healthy stimulant, but if they had too many elections they would create an unhealthy excitement, besides leading to a great deal of expense. There was nothing one grudged more than the multiplication of officers and officials when the whole thing could be much better done by one establishment. The next point to which he desired to refer—one that affected Lanarkshire very closely—was the incidence of the public health rate. When the Act of 1889 was introduced as a Bill it contained a clause to the effect that the rates of the county were to be levied on the gross rental as it appeared on the valuation roll. Unfortunately, an Amendment was introduced in Committee excepting the public health rate from that general rule, and providing that the public health rate should be levied as before with the poor rate. That had caused extraordinary inconvenience, because the result was that under the system of classification under the Poor Law and the system of deductions the tax fell with fantastic variety on individual parishes. They might have a group of 14 different parishes, and yet, so far as the incidence of taxation was concerned, no two might be situated alike. This point might be dealt with in Committee, and he trusted that the Government would consent to Amendments in the direction of striking out the objectionable parts of the Act of 1889. There was also another matter that required to be looked into, and that was the difference that now existed under the Act of 1889 between the rights enjoyed by the Royal and Parliamentary burghs and the police burghs. Some of the Royal and Parliamentary burghs had only 1,000 or 2,000 inhabitants, whilst some of the police burghs had from 60,000 to 80,000. The relations of the police burghs to the counties were unsatisfactory, and less favourable than those of the Royal and Parliamentary burghs. Representations were made in this regard when the Act of 1889 was going through the House, but no change was made. He trusted, however, that an alteration would be effected in the present Bill. The County Authorities in Scotland, whatever their politics, all agreed that the distinction was unnecessary, and sometimes unjust, and that the definition of "burgh" in the principal Act ought to be altered so as to include police burghs. With regard to the inclusion of the Board of Lunacy in the system of the Local Government Board, the House would know that the duties of the Board of Lunacy were almost entirely taken up with pauper lunatics. The subject matter of the two departments was closely connected, and they would have the same Parliamentary Chief.

It was only right to say that no change that could be made would improve the administration of the Board of Lunacy, which was admirable. The two Commissioners were distinguished and accomplished men, and the chief of them, Sir Arthur Mitchell, was probably one of the highest authorities on lunacy in the whole Kingdom. Any change that would tend to weaken the work of the Commissioners would be regrettable. Without expressing a definite opinion on the matter, he would merely say that the question of amalgamation might be considered on general grounds, and was well worthy the attention of the Government. He desired, before he concluded, to remark that he was in considerable doubt whether in one respect the Bill did not go too far. The Bill, whether taken alone or read with the Registration Bill of the Government, would introduce the principle of dispensing with the payment of local or municipal rates as a qualification of parochial or municipal electors. He thought that very questionable policy. The question of local rates for a local qualification stood on different ground from the qualification for Parliamentary elections. It was deliberately intended that before a man could exercise his local privileges he should pay the parish rates. There were many other conditions in this long Bill which one might have referred to, but he had selected those that he considered most important, and he earnestly hoped the Government would give favourable consideration to them. He must say that if the Bill were to remain unaltered, and nothing were to be done on such points as the amalgamation of the School Boards and Parochial Boards and the remedying of obvious injustices in connection with rating, it would be an exceedingly imperfect measure. He trusted that before they got into Committee they would hear from the Government that they were prepared to meet the Scotch Members to a great extent on these points.

MR. MAXWELL (Dumfriesshire) said that, as one who had taken part in the local affairs of his own county, he wished to say a word or two in this Debate. In the first place, he would congratulate the Secretary for Scotland on the Bill having at last got to a Second Reading. It was a measure long promised to Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman told them 18 months ago that he had the Bill in a forward state of preparation, and that being so they might take it that the measure represented the settled convictions of the Government as to what was most necessary in the way of legislation for Scotland. It appeared to him that there was a great deal of truth in what had been said by the hon. Member for North East Lanark who had just sat down—namely, that the Bill touched a great many subjects, and on that account it failed to deal completely and in a thorough manner with any one of the subjects. It struck him (Mr. Maxwell) that the Government would have been better advised if they had kept their efforts for one or two of the subjects they dealt with in the Bill, treating those subjects in a thorough manner. The Bill appeared to him to divide itself entirely into three parts: first, that part dealing with the establishment of a Local Government Board for Scotland; secondly, by the part dealing with the setting up of Parish Councils in the parishes of Scotland; and, thirdly, the part amending the Local Government Act of 1889. Dealing with the first of these, he was glad to hear from the Secretary for Scotland in introducing the Bill a tribute to the work done by the Board of Supervision. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman so far, that it was desirable that there should be some change in its constitution; but he thought, looking back at the work done with regard to the administration of the Poor Law since 1845, that its influence on the whole had been for good. It had induced the Parochial Boards to carry out the Poor Law in a better manner than they would otherwise have done. But there were heavy duties put on the Board of Supervision in 1867 under the Public Health Act, and he was not sure that the Board of Supervision had been so successful in carrying out those duties. He did not know that it had been so well equipped for the purpose as it should have been. It had been subject to frequent attacks in the House and outside it when compelling dilatory Local Authorities to do their duty. It had not always had that support from prominent public men which he thought it was entitled to, and he thought it had failed in this—that it had no one directly responsible for its operations. That would be remedied by the Bill by making the Secretary for Scotland President of the Board, so that those who had attacked the Board of Supervision in the past would be able to direct their attacks in the future against the Secretary for Scotland if there was a failure of duty. In replying to a deputation the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland had laid down two conditions for the constitution of the Board: in the first place, that members of the Board should be paid to give their whole time to their work; and, in the second place, that they should always be on the spot. He (Mr. Maxwell) doubted whether these requisites were carried out by the proposed composition of the Board. One would like to know, in considering the Bill, where the spot was to be—whether it was to be at Dover House or in Edinburgh? It was not quite clear in the Bill, he thought, where the headquarters were to be. In his opinion, the Board should be located in Edinburgh, so that it might be accessible at all times to the different Local Bodies. Then, when considering the composition of the Board, they must ask "Would the members be always on the spot?" Three of the members would be the Secretary for Scotland, the Under Secretary for Scotland, and the Solicitor General for Scotland, and so far as he could make out neither of these would for a great part of the year be in Edinburgh. Their attendance would be required in Parliament. Take the other qualification, that they must be paid for the duty they discharged. On that point the Scotch Members were entitled to have some information as to what was to be paid to the Sheriff who was to take the place of the three Sheriffs who were at present members of the Board of Supervision. Then, again, the case of the Solicitor General for Scotland came up. He in the future would have to take a considerable part in deciding those legal questions which had been referred to by the Member for the University of Edinburgh. The Scotch Members had some right to inquire what addition was to be made to the salary of the Solicitor General for Scotland in regard to the discharge of these duties. A Return had been lately issued which threw some interesting light on this question. In England it seemed the Solicitor General had £6,000 a year and some small pickings in addition; in Ireland the Solicitor General received £2,000 a year, but in Scotland he only received £955. If they were going to throw on him additional duties under this Bill it was time to consider the question of salary. Upon the question as to whether or not the Solicitor General should be a member, he should like to hear the hon. Member for the Elgin Burghs. That hon. Member had had to give up the post of Solicitor for Scotland for causes which he was sure every Scotch Member would regret, but he had told them that he found the discharge of these duties somewhat irksome, and that they imposed a considerable strain. Looking at the Return referred to by the late Lord Advocate, he saw that the attendances at the Board of Supervision did not form part of the strain on the right hon. Gentleman, for he found that from the end of June, 1892, to the end of June, 1893, no Solicitor General for Scotland had attended a single meeting of the Board of Supervision. So that the question of the remuneration of the Solicitor General for Scotland for carrying out the duties laid down by the Secretary for Scotland required to be looked into. Another point as to the composition of the Board was the place given upon it to the medical practitioner. To him it was a doubtful matter whether a medical practitioner should be a member of the Board. He did not know why in Scotland a medical practitioner should have a special prominence. In every county in Scotland there was a medical officer who attended to the interests of public health—and he thought there were some 25 of them in Scotland—all of whom, with the exception of five or six, devoted the whole of their time to their public duties (and every one of them would have done so if it had not been for the interference of the Secretary for Scotland). When they considered this fact they would admit there was some danger of the medical practitioner taking up an autocratic position with regard to sanitary questions—that there was some danger of Scotland becoming too much of a doctor-ridden country. The Board might become too official and bureaucratic. It had been pointed out by the hon. Member for the University of Edinburgh that it was difficult, if not impossible, to obtain the representative element upon a Board which had administrative responsibility. But he did think that some means should have been found whereby, without destroying the responsibility of the Board, there might have been two or more representatives of the Local Authorities placed on the Board. As a member of some of these Local Authorities, he feared that the Board would adopt a rigid and severe system, and would not take cognizance of the difficulties some Local Authorities sometimes experienced in carrying out those things which they believed to be for the good of their districts. If too rigid a system were adopted they might have the Local Authorities objecting and refraining from carrying out that which they considered best because of the compulsion placed upon them to do it in a certain way. Parting from that question of the composition of the Local Government Board, he would like to say a word about the other part of the Bill which established new Governing Bodies in the parishes throughout Scotland. It seemed to him that only those who had an abiding interest in the parishes should be entitled to election on those bodies. He could not agree—taking the measure in conjunction with the Registration Bill—with the three months' residence qualification and the abolition of the necessity for the payment of rates. This might give to the chance dwellers in a parish, who would have none of the burdens to bear, far too much power. In connection with the question of controlling the borrowing powers of the Parish Councils, they could not keep out of sight the experience of certain parts of Scotland in regard to the education rate. In certain counties the Education Department had virtually to take over the management of education because the rates were so excessive. With that in view the Secretary for Scotland should really consider that under the proposed new qualification he would not be putting the power into the hands of people interested in the well-being of the parish. These new authorities the Secretary for Scotland was anxious to call "Parish Councils," though he (Mr. Maxwell) did not see why they should give up the old Scotch name of "Parochial Boards." Their first duty would be to administer the Poor Law. He thought the Secretary for Scotland might have paid some tribute to the work which had been done by the Parochial Boards in Scotland. He did not think they had ever been accused of showing the slightest partiality in the administration of relief, nor could it be said that they had not done their work with prudence and at the same time in a liberal spirit. Those who had taken part in parochial administration knew how annoying it was when those who had done all the work were overruled by someone who only came down when there was a question of an appointment, and who had his pocket full of proxies. He thought there was an almost unanimous desire to see some reform in the constitution of the Parochial Boards. There were two points in connection with the administration of the Poor Law which were not dealt with in the Bill. The Bill related to the area of chargeability and rateability. That question was brought to the notice of the Secretary for Scotland by a deputation which waited upon him during the present Session. Undoubtedly in many of the small parishes the expense of management was out of all proportion to the amount spent on the relief of the poor. Contiguous parishes bore very different burdens in consequence, not of differences in management, but of there being in one of the parishes a large village in which the poor had congregated. One other point which had not been dealt with was that of the incidence of rating. The hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. Crawford) had referred to the inequality caused by the present mode of imposing the public health rate throughout Scotland. Everybody knew how much trouble and difficulty was caused by the present method of imposing that rate, and how unfairly it acted as between different parishes. A Committee which sat in 1892 presented a Report to that effect, and recommended that there should be only one basis of assessment, which should be the gross valuation as entered on the valuation roll. The matter was before the Conference of County Councillors which sat in Edinburgh, and a very large majority of those present at that Conference were in favour of having the public health rate imposed on the gross valuation. The subject was one which the Secretary for Scotland was bound to deal with in the Bill in some way or other. The hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. Crawford) had raised a question respecting the transfer of education to the new bodies. He (Mr. Maxwell) quite admitted that there were difficulties in connection with the question, and that the transfer of education would require a good deal of adjustment between different areas. He thought there was a great deal to be said for handing the management of education to the County Councils through their District Committees. At the present time there were so many bodies interested in education in Scotland that they really could not work harmoniously together. The School Board had to comply not only with the conditions laid down by the Education Department, but also with the conditions laid down by the Science and Art Department. Other bodies dealing with additional matters were the Technical Education Committees of County Councils and the Secondary Education Committees set up by the present Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan). The great number of different bodies which thus had to deal with the subject reduced the management of education almost to chaos. There was, therefore, a good deal to be said for the proposal to transfer the management of education generally to the District Committees. If it were carried out the District Committees would be able to grade the schools, and he knew that the teachers were in favour of the proposal. Personally, he was not in favour of making over the control of education entirely to the County Councils. Education had been a local affair in Scotland for the last 200 years, and the Scottish parish schools had done more for Scotland than any other institution. He thought also that the people of the parish would not take the same interest in their schools if they were placed under the control of a larger body than at present. He thought that the hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. Crawford) was right in pressing the Government to deal with this question in the Bill. He did not for a moment say that in the large burghs education and the Poor Law should be managed by the same body, because in that case the burden that would be thrown upon the members of the Boards would be far too great. But in the ordinary rural parishes the change which had been advocated might be carried out on the grounds of efficiency and economy. In 1889 the present Secretary for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), speaking on the Second Reading of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, and referring to the Parochial Boards and the School Boards, said that there was a strong and prevalent opinion in Scotland that there were too many of these bodies, and that if they were consolidated the work would be better done, whilst better men would be induced to serve upon them. With all respect for the Secretary for Scotland he (Mr. Maxwell) thought that the Secretary for War was a better exponent of Scottish feeling on this subject than the Secretary for Scotland. It was worth while bearing in mind that an election would be saved by leaving the one body to deal with the two subjects. He did not think that the Government considered the ratepayers of Scotland as much as they ought to do, in view of their proposals in that ill-fated measure the Sea Fisheries Bill, in the Registration Bill of this year—which would make a considerable addition to the rates—and in the Fatal Accidents Inquiries Bill, which would put a small but quite a new burden on the backs of the ratepayers. There was great force in what had been pointed out by the late Lord Advocate (Sir C. Pearson) respecting burghs in urban landward parishes. It appeared to him (Mr. Maxwell) that the burghs would be shut out from certain benefits which would be conferred on the landward portions of parishes. He did not see, for instance, that they would have any power to deal with roads, although the Landward Committees would have certain powers on that subject. Powers were conferred by the Bill on certain bodies to take land compulsorily. There were two purposes for which the land might be taken, and with regard to those two purposes opinion was very much divided in Scotland. In the first place, there were cases in which land might be taken for what were distinctly public or County Council purposes, such as the making of new roads or the building of hospitals. He believed that there was an almost unanimous feeling in Scotland that compulsory powers should be given for such purposes as these, but a different question arose when the House came to consider purposes which did not affect the life of the whole community, but were apparently only for the benefit of an individual or a set of individuals. He referred to such purposes as allotments. The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan), in his opening speech, said that the Allotments Act in Scotland was almost a nullity, and he seemed to indicate that this was due to the bodies which administered the measure and to the want of compulsory powers. He (Mr. Maxwell) very much doubted whether this was the case. He thought there was a very small demand for allotments in Scotland, and he found some confirmation of the view he held in the Report of the Sub-Commissioners of the recent Commission. The hon. Member for the Leith Burghs (Mr. Munro-Ferguson) must be very disappointed with this Bill, because in 1889 he moved an Amendment to the Local Government Bill asking that County Councils should have power to take land compulsorily for the purpose of feuing. In some parts of Scotland there was as much reason for giving these local Governing Bodies this power as regarded buildings as in reference to allotments, and owners of land were not very well advised in obstinately refusing such powers. Still, they were entitled to stipulate that if those powers were given they should be properly carried out. The settlement of these questions should be altogether freed from local and personal bias, and also from political motives. He did not think those powers were properly provided for in the Bill with regard to taking land by compulson. Power was to be given to the County Councils on the representation of Parish Councils to cause inquiries to be made in taking land compulsorily in allotments for agricultural purposes. In that respect the Bill closely followed the English measure. On both sides of the House it was considered that a better body was obtained in the County Councils—a body freer from local and personal interests. But he would like to point out that there was a great difference as regarded Scotland. The population of England and Wales was contained in 52 counties; while the 4,000,000 population of Scotland was scattered over 33 counties, 1,000,000 being in Lanarkshire, and 15 of the counties had a population of only 50,000. In the representatives of those counties a body might be secured altogether free from local influence and personal bias. Take the county, for example, with which he was best acquainted, with a little over 40,000 and a considerable number of small landowners, in illustration of the difficulty of carrying out these compulsory powers. The real difficulty would arise where there were a lot of small owners and sometimes two farms, perhaps equally eligible. The members of these Councils would feel some delicacy in deciding a question of that kind with regard to the land of a man whom they met every week either in kirk or market. Under the Local Government Body in England there were a large number of officials who had constant experience in carrying out inquiries of this kind; but under the new Local Government Body in Scotland there would be no such officials. He did not suppose the Advocate General would suggest that those gentlemen would be qualified to hold inquiries of that kind. Briefless barristers in Parliament House might look for their reward for political services in being sent down to make investigation in these cases, but they would not be likely to secure the confidence of the people affected by this Bill. The Secretary for Scotland had not made this Bill distinctly Scottish. A model could be found which might have been followed in reference to these inquiries: that not sufficiently-appreciated official the Sheriff might have been brought in. Power might have been given to go to the County Council and say—"This is a case in which compulsory powers should be exercised;" and if the County Council was satisfied that a *primâ facie* case had been made out, the Sheriff might be called in to make an inquiry. In many cases the matter might have been settled without an appeal. He would refer to Crawford's Commission to show that a body might have been found more conversant with these matters than that now proposed. A system might have been found less cumbersome and expensive than that proposed in the Bill, which, at the same time, would have gained confidence on all hands. This Bill was not altogether satisfactory. No extravagant expectations were entertained in Scotland with regard to the blessings to be conferred by it. People did not expect that the peat mosses would weigh with golden grain in consequence of it, though, perhaps, the Secretary for Scotland had sometimes been inclined to soar into the regions of imagination in reference to the blessings which it might be hoped would flow from it. No one, however, would grudge him all honour if the House should be able to mould this into a useful, practical, and beneficial measure.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) congratulated his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Lanarkshire in having made good his statements that this Bill did what it ought not to do, and did not do what it ought. It seemed to be generally understood on both sides of the House that the leading principle of this Parish Councils Bill was non-contentious, and he had no desire to disturb the existing harmony. But, like his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Lanarkshire, he was a little doubtful whether there was much enthusiasm in Scotland in favour of this Bill. He was inclined to think there was in most places a sort of apathy about it, but in a considerable number of places the feeling amounted to downright dislike. Before the last elections a prominent working man, a friend of his, had said he approved of most things the Unionist Government had done, but one thing he could not forgive them for, and that was the establishment of County Councils. He (Mr. Hozier) was rather surprised, and asked his friend why he had such a dislike to County Councils, and was told, "Because they bring more elections and impose more rates;" and his friend went on to say they had had more than enough of both already. He could well understand many people in Scotland being exactly of his friend's opinion, and when they fully realised that compulsory Parish Councils were to be established in every parish in Scotland they would begin to recognise that it meant still more elections and still more rates. He was, therefore, very doubtful whether the people of Scotland would be deeply grateful to the Government for introducing this Bill. But, leaving the general principle, it was rather hard, when the Government had made a point of this being a non-contentious measure, that they should have introduced three very contentious points into their proposals. Those points were: first, the repeal of disqualification for the non-payment of rates; secondly, the unlimited rating powers given to the proposed Parish Councils; and, thirdly, the abolition of the Standing Joint Committee. With regard to the first point, the Bill as it stood undoubtedly did away with the disqualification as far as the members of the Boards were concerned, and when read with the Registration Bill it also did away with the disqualification as far as the electors were concerned. Hon. Members had perhaps not realised what an enormous change that meant in the administration of the Poor Law. In Glasgow alone there were at present 28,152 persons disqualified for non-payment of rates, and struck off accordingly from the municipal roll. Would the Secretary for Scotland assert that those persons were specially industrious, capable, or deserving citizens? He would go further, and ask the temperance legislators what they thought of placing those people on the voters' roll. Would the temperance advocates hand over to those 28,000 persons the granting of licences under local veto? Would people connected with the convention of Royal and Parliamentary burghs like to see those persons on the electoral roll, and exercising the franchise? Would the Convention of County Councils which was likely to be established consider that those persons should be entitled to vote? They would surely, like every sensible man in Scotland, be among the very first to desire that no person unable or unwilling to pay rates, or in receipt of parish relief, should be qualified to vote as an elector to the Parish Councils? Then with regard to the rating powers of the Parish Councils. The Secretary for Scotland said he was not at all sure that in Scotland very considerable consternation would not be created by laying down, as in the English Act, 6d. as the rate in the £1, to which it was expected the Parish Councils should work. Knowing Scotland as he did, he (Mr. Hozier) was positive far greater consternation would be caused throughout the country if no limitation whatever was placed on the rating powers of Parish Councils. His right hon. Friend had argued from the past to the future—from the known to the unknown. When one did that, care should be taken that the circumstances of the past were as far as possible identical with those likely to occur in the future. But it was just the reverse in the present case. The Returns recently issued showed that even in the past in many parts of Scotland large sums of money had been expended. In one parish he had himself noticed the rates were as high as 8s. in the £1. He did not think, therefore, that even a 6d. rate would very much flabbergast a Parish Council. But any economy which could be cited was, of course, in the past when the chief ratepayers more or less controlled the expenditure. Now an entirely new body was to be established as the electorate, most of whom paid very small rates, while some absolutely refused to pay rates at all, and some were absolutely in receipt of Poor Law relief. In all seriousness, was such a body likely to act economically? They had had considerable experience in unlimited liability concerns in Scotland, and no place had suffered more than Glasgow. They would prefer to have some kind of limit even if it were higher than they liked to see. Even as to rates the Education rate had afforded them an extremely good lesson by which they ought to profit. When the Education Act was passed they were told they need be under no fear of very high rating, but the rate now amounted in many cases to over four times the highest estimate when the Bill was introduced. The people of Scotland would like to know the worst, and not to have an unlimited liability threatening them. As to the Standing Joint Committee, Scotchmen were familiar with the way in which it was constituted, and how it controlled capital expenditure. The arguments in reference to those matters were put fully before the House in 1889 when the Local Government Bill was brought forward. For that Standing Joint Committee it was actually proposed to substitute as a check upon each County Council the Finance Committee and the Police Committee of that very County Council—these two committees being simply working committees appointed by the County Council itself from its own numbers. Upon this point people who were not members of County Councils entertained probably an even stronger opinion than those who were and who from *esprit de corps* did not wish County Councils to be in any way checked or hindered. It was known that several of the County Councils did not care for this check of the Standing Joint Committee, and it was therefore all the more noteworthy, when the conference of County Councils assembled in Edinburgh, to which the Secretary for Scotland had alluded, that they voted for maintaining the Standing Joint Committee by a majority of 22 to 16. Considering that that vote was given against their natural *esprit de corps*, and considering that they were the freely-elected Representatives of the people, he did not see why the Secretary for Scotland should go directly contrary to the views of the people thus expressed. So much for the three specially contentious points. With regard to the details of the measure, he was sorry more had not been done in the way of making such technical alterations as experience had shown to be necessary. The Secretary for Scotland sent round a Circular to all the counties in Scotland asking for suggestions how the Local Government Act could be improved from the practical experience gained in working that Act. Lanarkshire, among others, sent in a list of various points requiring attention. He was sorry to say he had been informed that very few indeed of those recommendations had been carried out. One suggestion, indeed, had been acted upon. Provision had been made for the withdrawal of candidates nominated for election to a County Council. It was hardly to be believed that at present a man could not withdraw from his candidature even if nominated against his will. A relation of his own had been nominated without his consent being either given or implied, and he found it was absolutely impossible for him to withdraw that nomination; he could only send round a circular and advertise in the newspapers asking his supporters not to vote for him. But, at the same time, all the expenses for ballot-boxes and polling clerks had to be incurred just as though there was a real contested election. He was glad provision had been made for this in the Bill, so that persons nominated might withdraw from the candidature. But it would hardly be believed that a candidate, even according to the new Bill, could not give in his withdrawal in his own name alone, but must get leave from his proposer or seconder. He would like to know why that was the case? Surely a nominated candidate might be allowed to sign his own name to the application of withdrawal without getting the consent either of his proposer or his seconder? The subjects he was sorry were not touched upon were numerous. Just as instances he would mention the difficulties with regard to special constables, who could not, according to present circumstances, be sworn in in county districts. Moreover, there was the question of the Stamp Duty on documents under the Public Health Act. Prior to the Act of 1889, the County Local Authorities were exempt from the Stamp Duty; but after that Act passed the Inland Revenue stepped in and said that the new Local Authority—the County Council—should not be exempt from the stamp as the old authority had been. This was especially hard on the counties, considering that in towns and burghs the Local Authorities were still exempt from the duty. He had intended to move an Instruction, but he believed they would be able to deal with this question in Committee, and he intended to introduce Amendments then with the object of removing this grievance and putting the counties on the same footing as the burghs in this matter. He did not intend to oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, or prevent it being handed over to the tender mercies of the Hybrid Committee which the House had appointed. He called it hybrid because he could not admit that it was a Scottish Committee which had been constituted.

*Sɪʀ C. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) said, he thought it was about time someone got up to say a word in favour of the Bill. Every speaker hitherto had, without venturing to condemn the Bill, damned it with faint praise. Even his hon. Friend the Member for North-East Lanark had said that if such-and-such Amendments were made, and such-and-such Instructions were to be introduced, it might be made a good Bill; but if these things were not done, it would sin against all the canons which he had laid down as constituting a good Bill. Well, as one who had worked in regard to the matter of this Bill for the last 15 or 20 years, he begged to say that he considered it a first-rate Bill. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members laughed. Of course, it did not come up to their views. It did not go wide enough and did not embrace superannuation, chargeability, the incidence of rating, the Law of Settlement; it did not provide for special constables or the remission of Stamp Duties to County Councillors; and in so far it was not as good a Bill as might have been brought forward. But if his right hon. Friend allowed himself to be tempted by the inducements that many held out to introduce all these subjects into his Bill he could assure the right hon. Gentleman of one thing, and it was this—that the Bill would never become law. There were one or two points on which he quite agreed with various Members who had spoken. Where, for instance, they could without confusion make the Councils to be constituted under the Bill deal with other local matters let them do it by all means. They were establishing Parish Councils in many parishes where at present there were no Parochial Boards. Those would be new bodies, and he recognised the importance—the desirability—of extending their control to education very much more widely. When he introduced his Parochial Boards Bill, and was contending for the principle that these Boards should be popularly elected bodies, he did not meet with universal assent. Time after time he had been opposed, and he was quite familiar with the cry of alleged danger which had been raised that night to a minor extent. He was familiar with all the arguments as to the danger of popularising these institutions. The right hon. Gentleman the ex-Lord Advocate, in his very critical and analytical speech, commenced with a defence of the Board of Supervision. Considering the way in which that Board was constituted, it had possibly worked remarkably well; but what was the Board, and how was it constituted? It consisted of the chairman (an advocate), the Lord Provosts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, the Solicitor General, three Sheriffs, and Lord Hamilton; but when there was great distress in the Highlands, and he was appealed to on the subject, he found of more use than the whole of the experts the Lord Provost of Glasgow, upon whose absence from the weekly meetings the right hon. Gentleman had commented. The Board was a Board of lawyers. They were paid, and the Lord Provosts were not. As a matter of fact, the work of the Board was done by the paid members of the Board. It was an administrative body, and occupied itself with two things—Poor Law administration and sanitary administration; but it was absolutely incompetent as an authority which was responsible for the protection of Scotland against disease and epidemic. Again and again he had had to call the attention of the House to the causes of the spread of disease in various parts of the country, and the failure of the Board to cope with them. As to whether there was to be a medical member on the Board or not, a great deal might be said on the one side or the other; and if they were going to exclude experts from the new Board they should exclude experts of all sorts, and let the Board be advised on medical, legal, and all other subjects by paid advisers from without. They might make it in that way more a branch of the Scotch Office, as he thought it ought to be; but in any case the head of the new Board must be directly responsible to the House of Commons, and must face any disagreeables which must attach to that responsibility. That was a principle for which he had always contended. He knew no point on which the feeling throughout Scotland was more unanimous than in declaring that a sweeping reform of the Board of Supervision, as at present constituted, was absolutely necessary, and of first importance in connection with any reform of the local government system in Scotland. In attacking the present system as he had done, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland deserved not faint-hearted praise, but the warmest thanks of every Member who sat on the Liberal side of the House. So far as the other branch of the Bill was concerned—that portion relating to the reform of the Parochial Boards—one would really imagine from the speeches of some of his friends that the present constitution of these Boards was perfect; that there was very little to be desired, and that matters were conducted in the most wonderfully excellent manner. What he ventured to say was that that proposition was the most absurd thing on the face of the earth, and that the administration of Parochial Boards was inefficient, out of date, and corrupt. He did not mean that they put their hands into the till and took the ratepayers' money. He would show what he meant by an incident that occurred only a couple of years ago at Greenock. There the Parochial Board consists of all the heritors, some 1,000 or 1,200 in number. With the heritors were joined the kirk session and a few elected members. Well, a Board of this unwieldy description must elect a Committee of Management. How did the election at the time referred to proceed? A number of mandates for the election of rival committees were handed in; but when a scrutiny was demanded, it was found that a number of these mandates were those of dead men, or mandates never given for the purpose for which they had been issued, and in all about a third of the mandates were rejected as null and void. He thought he was justified in saying that that was a corrupt way of conducting the business. There had been objection taken to the abolition of ratepaying as a qualification for voting at the election of Parochial Boards. Was the right hon. Gentleman (the ex-Lord Advocate) aware that the ministers of the parish churches were exempted from the payment of poor rates, or that the kirk session might not pay rates? yet the ministers and kirk sessions were in many cases the majority of the Parochial Boards, and could do what they liked at them. This was the sort of thing that the Bill was to put an end to. They were told that if they allowed elective Boards to be constituted they would have a class of men upon them that would act detrimentally to the ratepayers in the administration of public funds. There was no danger of that. The ratepayers had control of matters, and they might rely upon them punishing severely any man who abused his position by using it in the interests of his relatives. They were told that they might have a man on the Board who refused to pay his rates; but if the rest of the members of the Board did their duty they would make him pay, or could make him bankrupt, and then he would cease to be a member of the Board, which he did not at present do in the case of nine-tenths of the Parochial Boards of Scotland. Was the right hon. Gentleman aware that such Municipalities as those of Glasgow and Edinburgh were managed by a body of gentlemen not corruptly and not particularly badly, and that these gentlemen were not elected half by owners and half by occupiers? Experience in connection with municipal administration in towns had proved that there was no danger in the widening of the franchise, and they on that side of the House were certainly not afraid to grant the people the control of their own parochial affairs. It appeared to him that the Bill of the Government was a very excellent Bill. In the omnibus part of it—the reforms which it proposed to make in the Local Government Act of 1889—the Secretary for Scotland had chosen those salient features which he considered called for amendment. He did not imagine the right hon. Gentleman considered any one of these propositions in that omnibus part of the Bill were of vital importance. There were many things which Members would have liked to have seen dealt with, but as in his experience he had seen a good number of measures—and Government measures, too—dealing with poor law reform wrecked by reason of their attempting to do too much, he recommended his right hon. Friend to be careful about the introduction of a number of additional subjects which would endanger the prospects of the measure being added to the Statute Book.

*Mr. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said, he regretted the advice given in his closing sentence by the hon. Member who had just sat down, because he thought there were many points on which the Bill could be improved. He hoped, therefore, that the preliminary processes suggested by the hon. Member would not be so much availed of by the Government as to take from independent Members their opportunities of offering advice, or to affect the spirit in which such advice would be received. The hon. Member had spoken of the Bill being "damned with faint praise," but the hon. Member himself did not appear to be altogether at one with the Government on the subject of the constitution of the Local Government Board, as he had said he thought the proposal of the Government on that subject was not the best that could be devised. Presumably the hon. Member meant that he could have suggested a better constitution for the Board.

Sir C. CAMERON: No; I had nothing of that kind in my mind.

*Mr. RENSHAW went on to say that he could not refer to the constitution of the Board of Supervision, but he could not help complimenting the officials of that Board on the manner in which under great difficulties they had discharged the duties that had been imposed upon them. As to the proposed Local Government Board, the idea of divided responsibility was conveyed by the fact that three members of the Board were to be resident in Scotland, while three would for the greater part of the year, if Parliament sat as long each year in the future as it had done last year and was doing now, have to live in London. It seemed to him that the new Board would have too much of an official character about it. He believed it would commend itself to the Parochial Authorities, the County Authorities, and the people of Scotland if the Board were made to contain certain representatives of those Public Authorities with which it would deal, and which would have to be in close relationship with it. Some representative element of the sort might be selected by the Secretary for Scotland. The Board might be made to include some gentleman who was conversant with county matters, some gentleman who was conversant with the administration of affairs in the large centres of civic life, and some gentleman who was more particularly identified with the parochial interests. Four or five gentlemen of this sort might be selected by the Secretary for Scotland, with a view to the particular matters with which the Board would have to deal, to remain, say, for three years in office, and then to make room for a fresh infusion of new blood into the Board. He thought it was worth considering whether it would be possible to give the Board power to arbitrate in regard to questions of settlement, so as to enable Local Authorities to avoid the tremendous expense which they now not infrequently incurred in settling such questions in the Law Courts. There was one feature of the Bill which had been somewhat adversely criticised by some of the existing Parochial Authorities. He referred to the links which it established between County and Burgh Authorities, and Parochial Councils. It was, in his opinion, most desirable to secure continuity of operation between the different bodies that had charge of public affairs, and he hoped, therefore, that the Secretary for Scotland would maintain some sort of control on the part of the larger representative bodies over the Parish Councils. In regard to the constitution of the new Parish Councils, the House had already been reminded that the Bill must be read along with the Period of Qualification Bill. Under the last-named Bill an occupancy of three months, without payment of any rates whatever, would qualify an elector to vote for a Municipal Board, a County Council, or a Parish Council for a period of three years. There was thus a great disparity between the length of occupancy and the period for which the individual elected was to discharge the duties of his office. The Secretary for Scotland would, he (Mr. Renshaw) thought, receive many and strong objections from all parts of Scotland to this portion of his Bill. He questioned very much whether the right hon. Gentleman would find a single Parochial Board or County Council that would express itself heartily in favour of this proposal. A Conference of some of the most important Burghal Parochial Boards in Scotland had passed a resolution adverse to the proposal to abolish the existing disqualification in respect of the non-payment of rates. He would mention the case of the Abbey Parish of Paisley as showing what effect the change was likely to have in placing upon the roll a large number of those who had not shown that they took an interest in the management of their local affairs. The parish had a population of 42,887 persons, and in the return of rated inhabitants made on the Motion of the hon. Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) in 1890 it was stated that there were 9,768 rated inhabitants. The Parochial Board, in a statement they had just issued, showed that the number of defaulters in the parish in the year ending in June, 1893, was 2,519. The Government now deliberately proposed to put these 2,519 non-rate-paying inhabitants on exactly the same footing as those members of the community who had hitherto discharged their responsibilities to the parish by the payment of their rates. In 1884 the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour), speaking on the proposal made by Mr. Fraser Mackintosh on the Franchise Bill to do away with the payment of rates as a qualification for an election, said—

> "Where persons were liable to pay poor rates and did not pay them, the hon. Member would enact that they should be enfranchised. That seemed to be directly in the teeth of the elementary principle that representation and taxation should go together."

There was a Division taken upon Mr. Fraser Mackintosh's proposal, which received the support of only nine Members of the House, and was opposed by the Lord Advocate, the Minister for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), the hon. Member for East Aberdeenshire (Mr. Buchanan), the right hon. Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), the late President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt), and it did seem a strange thing that in the short period which had since elapsed so great a conversion of so many great minds should have taken place. He thought it was desirable in the interests of the usefulness of the new bodies that were being created that in everything that was done by them they should have at their back a large body of trustworthy electors. In that case the new Councils would inspire public confidence, and their decisions would carry with them the approval of those persons in the community whose approval was best worth having. He thought he could almost appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland as not having quite made up his mind on the subject. There were two proposals in the Bill on the point. One was, that in 1894 the first election was to take place. The Bill contained no provision as to the electorate for the first election, and he therefore presumed that the roll of 1892 was to be used for the purpose, on which no defaulter's name was enrolled. The new-fangled principle proposed by the Government was not to be applied until the second election took place in 1895, and the new electorate would then have the opportunity of upsetting what the old electorate had done. He passed to the question of those who were to be privileged to occupy the position of Parish Councillors. The Parish Councillors were to be chosen from among the parish electors or were to be persons who had

> "during the 12 months next preceding the election resided in the parish."

What did these last words mean? Did they mean that the persons must have resided in the parish for 12 months continuously, or that they might have resided in the parish for a week only during the 12 months? It would throw great responsibility on someone to decide a point of that kind. It was obvious that, as in the Schedule of the Bill, they were going to repeal the 23rd section of the Poor Law Act of 1845, which declared

> "that no person should be entitled to act as an elected member unless he paid assessment to the parish."

They were going to allow the Parish Council to be elected partly by individuals who had never paid their rates, though they would have control over the disbursement of the rates collected in the parish, and that the Parish Council might consist partly or wholly of those who had not paid the rates they were called on to administer. As to another point, Section 11 provided that a husband and wife should not both be qualified in regard to the same property. He wished to know if the meaning of that was that where a house belonged to the wife and was occupied by the husband there should not be double qualification. With regard to Section 2 of Clause 14, he should like to know whether it was proposed to throw the expense of the elections in counties on the whole county, while in burghs it was to be charged on the parish funds? He thought the right way would be to provide that where an election for a County Council and a Parish Council took place at the same time one-half the expense should be charged to the county and the other to the parish, or that if the election was only for a Parish Council the whole cost should be charged to the parish. He felt very strongly on the School Board question, and had placed an Instruction on the Paper in regard to it. In many parts of Scotland the parishes were very small. In Roxburghshire, for instance, there were 31 parishes, and only two of them had above 5,000 inhabitants, while 22 had below 1,000 each. It seemed to him ridiculous to have dual Local Authorities in small parishes—one dealing with parish government and the other with education. In regard to the new special rate, he urged that it should not be an addition to the poor rate, but that it should be a separate rate levied half on the owner and half on the occupier, in order that each ratepayer might know clearly what the additional responsibility was in respect to the payment of rates under the Bill. With regard to the rating powers of the new bodies, it must be felt that there ought to be some limit to it. It might be, that it should not be so high as in England, but certainly the amount should not exceed that adopted in the case of England. Reference had been made to the varying amount of rates levied in different parts of Scotland at present. He had been much struck by a Return in which he saw that in the Parish of Bourtie of Aberdeenshire the whole rate levied for parochial purposes was only 1½d. in the £1. At Stair, in Ayrshire, it was 2d. in the £1; in the Cumbraes in Bute it was 2½d., and in one parish in Lanarkshire it was 1⅝d. Passing from the low to the high levels, they came to the Parish of Lochs in Ross-shire, where the rate was 3s. 4d., to another where it was 4s., to one in Zetland where it was 5s., and to one bearing the appropriate name of Yell, where it was 3s. 10¾d. In view of their experience in connection with water and drainage district rates in Scotland, he thought that if the amount spent in one year should, through exceptional occurrence, exceed the limit of the rate, the excess by which it was above the rate should be the first charge on the expenditure of the next year. He would pass over the question of the Standing Joint Committee, merely remarking that what was stated by the hon. Member for North-East Lanark was no doubt perfectly correct as to the difference between the state of the law in counties and burghs. As a matter of fact, in the burghs, however, where the police were entirely managed and controlled by the Burgh Authorities, the police rate was levied one-half on the owners and one-half on the occupiers, and in the counties of Scotland the police rate, unless it exceeded the stereotyped average rate, fell entirely on owners. That constituted a great difference between the case of the police in the burghs and the police in counties, and it would be a hardship if, in the event of a change being made, it was not accompanied by a re-arrangement of the rate in such a way that one-half of it was borne by the occupiers and the other half by the owners. He was afraid he could not compliment the right hon. Gentleman upon the 63rd clause of his Bill, which dealt with the question of medical officers and Sanitary Inspectors. The relation of these officials to the police burghs in a county had always been a difficult question. He believed the provisions of the Bill would make confusion worse confounded. What was wanted was to strengthen and not to weaken the Medical and Sanitary Authorities in their relation to those burghs, and it should be indicated that in respect of the contribution which the burghs made, and which ought to be strictly limited in amount, the police burghs should have a right to the use of these officers for advisory and consultative purposes. There were a great many questions in connection with this measure which would have to be discussed in Committee, and, though he did not propose to approach those details, he would like to point out that, while they might be able to amend this Bill in many directions, and make it a more workable measure, it must be regarded as an undesirable one—with all the possible benefits they might derive from it—unless the question of a Standing Joint Committee was dealt with on a broader basis than that proposed in the Bill, and unless they did away with the provisions by which a large portion of the power of the electorate for establishing the new Parish Councils was conferred upon those who had neglected to discharge their most obvious duties as ratepayers and was confined to those who discharged their local responsibilities by the payment of their rates.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) said, that the Bill was the carrying forward of the scheme of local government which was introduced in 1889 by the late Government. They brought in a Local Government (Scotland) Bill which dealt with the case of counties on the basis of the franchise in burghs. They also announced and brought in, as part of their scheme, a Bill relating to the election of Parochial Boards in Scotland. According to that Bill the Parochial Board was to be elected one-half by owners and one-half by the occupiers in parishes. It was owing to this exceptional constitution of the Board that the Bill had not been persevered with. The present Government, however, had taken up the matter in a thorough manner by abolishing Parochial Boards and creating Parish Councils to be elected on a franchise similar to that of burghs and counties. The County Council Register, so far as applicable to the parish, was practically to be the Parish Register. No serious objection had been taken on the Opposition side to the constitution of Parish Councils, but some objections were taken to certain matters of detail more proper for Committee than for a Second Reading Debate. It was stated that parishioners might be parish electors who were in arrear with their poor rates. That, however, was not a true description of the Bill. As the Bill stood no one in arrear of poor rate could be on the roll of electors. Whether after the Registration Bill were passed this would be different would depend upon whether and how far the Registration Bill passed into law. The point might come up under the Registration Bill, and it would be for Parliament then to determine the question. Meantime it did not occur under this Bill. He next referred to the qualification of Parish Councillor, which he pointed out had been taken from the English Act. He preferred the Scotch precedent of the Local Government Act that the Parish Councillor, like the County Councillor, should be an elector. As to the Local Government Board, the question had been raised as to whether it should be representative or be partly a representative Board. He considered that the natural completion of local government in Scotland would be a Local Parliament in Scotland elected by the people and responsible to the people of Scotland, dealing with purely Scotch affairs, Scotch legislation and administration. Meantime, as the Secretary for Scotland was to be responsible to Parliament, he must necessarily have a Board more under his control. Then, again, the Board was to have large central powers of control over the Local Bodies, and was to exercise powers (especially as regards land) which at present were only exercised by Parliament. He did not think in its local administration the Local Government Board would be much different from the Board of Supervision. Most probably the present Chairman of the Board of Supervision would be Vice President, Dr. Littlejohn would be the medical officer, and one of the Sheriffs would be the legal member. He thought the Bill was wrong in holding both the parish and county election on the same day and in the same place, as it would lead to an undue complication and crowding up of matters which ought to be kept distinct. A candidate might be standing both as a County and a Parish Councillor, and the double election would give rise to great confusion. There was something more than mere expense to be looked at in connection with an election. It tended to promote discussion, and to keep up the public interest in public affairs, which was very desirable. If the exercise of the franchise was to be looked at as a drudgery and a task, if they added education to Parish Councils, and had triennial elections for Parliament on the same day and at the same time as the local elections, then undoubtedly an elector might perform his act of citizenship with the minimum of trouble and the maximum of expense on one day only once in every three years. But that was hardly the point from which to view popular elections. He thought the Chairman should, like the Provost of a burgh, hold office for three years—the full term—and not have the risk of three competitions for Chairmen in the course of one Parish Council. He thought the head office of the Local Government Board in Scotland should be in Glasgow, as being the more convenient centre. He was in favour of dealing by scheme with bequests at present vested in Parochial Boards left for special purposes, but presently applied in reduction of the rates. He was likewise in favour of the valuation roll being separated according to the different districts created, so as to show the rateable value of each assessable district. He hoped that clauses would be inserted in Committee giving Dean of Guild powers to County, District, and Parish Councils, so as to carry out proper sanitary and other requirements in the erection of dwelling-houses and other buildings. He also spoke in favour of loans by County Councils being accepted under the Trustees (Scotland) Act, and concluded by congratulating the Government on their measure.

*CAPTAIN HOPE (Linlithgow) said, he desired to discuss the Bill from the point of view of one who had considerable experience in carrying out the existing system of local government in Scotland, and also as the representative of a county which contained a good many Local Bodies besides the County Council. If he could have been satisfied that the Bill represented the settled convictions of Her Majesty's Government on local government in Scotland he would have been under the painful necessity of suggesting to the House that the Bill should not be read a second time; but as he believed that on many points the Government must have a more or less open mind, he would only point out some matters in which the Bill was considerably faulty. The objections he entertained with regard to the Bill were not based on any dislike of or objection to the principle of extending and completing the representative system of local government administration in Scotland. On the contrary, one of his objections to the measure was that it was not in any sense a completion of the scheme of local government which was begun in the Act of 1889. But his main objection was founded on the evidence which the Bill itself afforded, that it had been framed either in entire ignorance of the working of local administration in Scotland, or in contempt of the local feeling in Scotland in such matters, or in a combination of both. He had a serious objection to offer to the composition of the Local Government Board. He was afraid that on this point he would not be altogether in accord with the late Lord Advocate; because, whereas his right hon. Friend viewed the matter rather from the official standpoint, he viewed it from the point of view of those who would be officiated upon by this Board if it were brought into existence. It was no doubt desirable that there should be an efficient and responsible Board, and that it was a good principle that the Board should be brought under more direct Parliamentary responsibility than the existing Board of Supervision; but if those objects were to be attained, the Board proposed in the Bill would require much strengthening and much extension. Indeed, the proposed Board seemed to him to be more purely official than the Board of Supervision. He believed the confidence of the local Administrative Bodies of Scotland in such a Board would be greatly strengthened if it contained elements of representation of those who were in touch with the actual administration of local affairs. He did not, however, look forward to that Board being purely elective, for he thought there should be a critical body in an official position that would support local feeling where necessary, and also where necessary control the actions of Local Bodies when they were running on wrong lines. The Board of Supervision had, in its administration of public health matters, sometimes laid itself open to the feeling that it had interfered in small matters in a way which a purely official and not very responsible Board was sometimes tempted to do, and this interference had caused friction and annoyance. But it seemed to him that this Local Government Board would be open to the worst objections which were taken to the Board of Supervision in this particular respect. It would be a smaller Board, and even more official. The provision that one of the paid members should be a medical practitioner would rather result in making the Board consist chiefly of a politician in the first place, and a medical man in the second. He did not think he was saying anything uncivil or beyond the mark when he ventured to suggest that a medical practitioner was liable to have views of his own—some people would call them fads—and it came to be a question whether it would not be too entirely a Board that would be liable to ride hobbies in a way which would be rather expensive to the Local Authorities and the ratepayers, besides being an annoyance to many who would have to act under them. It was said that it was intended by the Bill to set up elective bodies in the parishes of Scotland to administer parish affairs. But, as far as he could understand the Bill, it was, owing to the extensive powers over Local Authorities proposed to be vested in the Local Government Board, about the largest scheme of centralisation that he had yet seen proposed in regard to local affairs in Scotland. With regard to the question of locality, it had been suggested by the hon. Member who had just spoken that on the point of population Glasgow should be the headquarters of the new Board. It had been so far taken for granted that Edinburgh would be more likely, as the acknowledged capital of the country; but if there was to be a dispute between the two great cities, it might be necessary and convenient to take a middle course, and choose somewhere else. He would suggest for the consideration of the Secretary for Scotland the town of Linlithgow. They had there an ancient Royal Palace, the place was famed in Scottish history; and it might be well to consider whether the Royal Palace might not be restored and renovated as, perhaps, the official residence of the Secretary for Scotland as President of the Local Government Board of that country. With reference to the part of the Bill dealing with Parish Councils, he would hint to gentlemen anxious for Home Rule for Scotland whether the phrase "Parish Council" had not got a very English sound about it which was foreign to and against the feelings of Scotland? He had often wondered why Scotsmen should be over-ridden by so many English ideas; and it was a point which was brought out in a remarkably strong way by the Bill introduced by a right hon. Gentleman who spoke so eloquently in favour of Home Rule for Scotland a couple of months ago. He thought if a new body of this sort was to be called into existence on the principle of its being a Representative Body, it was right that it should be done with a view to the completion of the machine of local administration, the first parts of which were set up by the Act of 1889. If it were regarded from that point of view, he ventured to say that the arrangements were not effective in a proper sense. The Parish Councils did not appear to complete the existing system in any way whatever. They were thrown into the arrangements of local administration rather in the way of a fifth wheel to the coach. The Bill destroyed the old Parochial Boards and their system, and set up in their place a complex machine full of difficulties and distinctions, as between landward and burghal parishes, Royal burghs, and police burghs, and Landward Committees. It appeared to him that the police burghs were receiving a very heavy slap in the face. They were to be debarred from a large number of new powers which were to be given to the Landward Committee of the Parish Councils. As he read the Bill, the inhabitants of a police burgh would be shut out from benefit under charities belonging to the parish. But he fancied that most of the parochial charities were in existence long before the police burghs. The great bulk of opinion, at any rate in the rural districts of Scotland, was in favour of the inclusion of the School Board administration in the administration of the new Parochial Representative Bodies. He believed that in many places the only thing that could make the idea of the new elective body tolerable at all to the people in general would be the idea that they were to be saved from a multiplicity of elections. An hon. Member opposite, as he had understood him, had declared it to be a part of the policy of the Party of which he was an ornament to increase the number of elections rather than diminish them. He had held out a happy prospect of an election every year. Well, he (Mr. Hope) had had some experience of an election of one kind or another occurring in successive years, and he did not wish to have it repeated more often than was necessary. To judge by the genuine outspoken opinion of the people, nothing could be more unpopular in Scotland than frequently recurring local elections, were they for the schools, the county, the parish, or anything else. It might be said that there would be difficulties in the way of putting school administration into the hands of the new Parish Councils. But, surely, when the Government undertook to make a great change in the administration of local affairs, or, indeed, to make any very great change in the administration of any of the affairs of the country, they must be prepared to face difficulties and to find a way out of them. As to the constitution of these bodies, he ventured to think that it would be found that the public voice of Scotland, when it realised the position that would be taken under this Bill, would make itself heard and possibly make itself felt even by Her Majesty's Government. The abolition of the ratepaying qualification in those who were to spend rates, or in those who were to elect the persons who were to spend rates, would arouse considerable opposition, and hostility would be increased by the discovery that the election might fall upon outsiders, whether ratepayers in a parish or not. In regard to the local qualification of Parish Councillors the English precedent had been followed; Parish Councillors were to be elected, not only from amongst those who were parish electors, but from amongst those who might have resided within three miles of the parish for a certain length of time. This might be a very satisfactory provision in regard to small English parishes, but the generality of Scottish parishes would find it a most objectionable idea that the whole of those who were to manage their parochial affairs might in some cases be elected from people outside the parish who were not even bound to be ratepayers within it. Then, as to new powers, he did not wish to go into the subject at any length, as it had been thoroughly dealt with already; but he did wish to give expression to the strong objection there was to the unlimited rating powers provided in the Bill, and to the compulsory powers in regard to the acquisition of land provided for. The powers of borrowing and of acquiring land ought to be vested, not in the Parish Council alone, but also in the

County Council to the extent of giving the larger body a controlling power. At present, a District Committee neglecting its duty in regard to public health administration might be called to account before the Board of Supervision by the County Council, but the Bill gave a similar power to the Parish Council. The justification for that, he confessed, he was unable to see. The Bill did not take away the power from the County Council, but would give a concurrent power to the Parish Council. Surely the revisionary power should be vested in the upper rather than the nether millstone. As to the multiplicity of elections, the Secretary for Scotland in introducing the Bill claimed that it would not increase the number of local elections. But while there was to be a purely elective Parish Council and a purely elective School Board in the same parish, he failed to see how it could be asserted that there was not one more election than at present. No doubt there was a provision, although he hardly thought it could have been worked out by one who had had the actual experience of the supervision of such elections, by which the County Council and the Parish Council elections were to take place on the same day, in the same place, and under the same supervision. That, however, did not relieve a police burgh from an election, as the municipal election would also take place in such burgh, at a different time from the county and parish elections. Those who had experience in the conducting of such elections had assured him that difficulties in the way of carrying on a double or a treble election would not be merely confined to the existence of two sets of voting papers and ballot boxes, but would require a great deal more supervision and work than the authors of the Bill contemplated. But even if it were possible to reduce the number of elections by carrying them on at the same time, the Bill provided that there should be a new Register. There was at present a County Council Register which embraced in the first place the Parliamentary Register, and which, in the second place, put on the roll Peers and women householders. Under the Bill there was to be a new piece of the Register which, apparently, was only to apply to Parochial Councils. Why it should apply to Parish Councils and not to County Councils, he confessed it passed his wit to understand, but as it stood the Bill would require the officer superintending the double election to deal with two registers as well as two ballot-boxes. He thought that the proposal to hand over the auditing of the Parish Council accounts to the county auditors would lead to considerable expense, and would thus form an additional grievance on the part of the ratepayers against those who had introduced this Bill. The cost of auditing of the county accounts had been doubled and trebled since the change of the arrangements formerly made by the Commissioners of Supply. The Government might have been content with establishing a Local Government Board or Parish Councils, but they had seen fit to append to these two measures a somewhat lengthy tail dealing with matters more strictly affecting County Councils in Scotland in their administration. One of the most notable points in regard to this part of the Bill was that the Secretary for Scotland, who in December called upon the County Councils of Scotland to furnish him with their views as to the amendments necessary to improve the Local Government Act of 1889, and who subsequently expressed great admiration of the way in which the business was conducted at a Conference of the County Councils of Scotland, showed that admiration, and the great use he had put the proposed amendments of the County Council to, by utterly overruling the greater part of the suggestions made by the Councils and the Conference. The Conference recommended that the Standing Joint Committee should not be interfered with, but the Secretary for Scotland did interfere with it. The Conference recommended that the appeal against the District Committee to the County Council should be dropped, whilst the appeal to the Sheriff should continue, but the Bill proposed to abolish the appeal to the Sheriff. A more mischievous suggestion had not been made. He had himself had experience of appeals against the District Committee, and his experience went to show that where a matter had been properly and carefully thought out by the District Committee it would stand the test of examination before those most competent to deal with such matters. If it would not stand that test it seemed to him it could not possibly be a satisfactory scheme. On no point had greater unanimity been shown by the County Councils than on the question of rating under the Public Health Act. That was one of the points which had been utterly ignored, and on which those who were interested in County Council administration felt that they had not received fair consideration. Then in regard to the provisions of the Bill in respect of capital expenditure, the County Council would first have to receive from the Finance Committee a recommendation to spend a certain sum on building, then they would have to consider and approve that recommendation, and, finally, they would have to go back to the Finance Committee for leave to undertake the work. Anything more absurd than such a proposal could not be conceived. He would conclude by quoting the opinion of a Radical friend of his with regard to this Bill. His friend, after a fortnight's consideration of the Bill, said that—

> "It was an utterly useless measure thrown at us at a time when nobody wanted it."

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): With the single exception of the hon. Member and his Radical friend—[An hon. MEMBER: "Name!"]—who can hardly be an old Radical if he does not at least approve of the provisions of the Bill that relate to the reformation of the Parochial Boards, I think the Government have every reason to be pleased with the Debate of this evening. It is quite true that in a Bill of this magnitude it is impossible to please everybody in every case. But it is at least a very great thing not to have displeased any single Member of the House to that extent as to render him an enemy of the Bill. I believe that this result has been effected not by being timid in the lines on which this Bill has been drawn, but because the Bill has been arranged on principles that are on the whole satisfactory to the people of Scotland, and on principles likewise which will enable in Committee hon. Members who take exception to any of its details to amend those details. For that reason there appears a general consensus of opinion to let the Bill pass its Second Reading as soon as possible, and to send it to that Committee where it will be dealt with in a manner which, no doubt, will render it more acceptable than it is at present. The Debate was begun in a speech of a statesmanlike character by the Member for the Universities of St. Andrews and Edinburgh (Sir C. Pearson). I listened carefully to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, but could not gather that he is really an enemy of the proposals relating to the constitution of the new Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman began by speaking with reserve of the Board of Supervision. He said that it was a cheap Board compared with the English and Irish Local Government Boards. I agree that the Board of Supervision is an exceedingly cheap one. I cannot help thinking it is a Government Department that is a little stinted, and the Bill proposes in a very moderate manner to increase the amount of public money which is spent on local government in Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members in other parts of the House have expressed the apprehension that the Local Government Board for Scotland will henceforth be too much of a London Board. For that fear I believe there is no foundation whatever. The Board will be situated at Edinburgh, and the only sense in which it will become a London Board will be that the chief of the Board will have direct responsibility to the House of Commons, which he has not at present, and the Board will be brought into the closest relation to the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman asked me to give any instance in which the Board of Supervision has been found wanting either in supplying proper information to the Government or in adopting the Government policy, and my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Lanarkshire stated that, within his official experience, there have been cases in which the policy of the Board has prevailed against the policy of the Government. To give a specific instance would be invidious, but undoubtedly quite recently there has been a case in which the view of the Board was strongly opposed to the view of the Minister who at that time was responsible to Parliament. I take no exception to the manner in which the members of the Board have carried out their duties under their present constitution, but that constitution is faulty, and I believe it will be amended in the Bill in a way which will enable the work to be much more satisfactorily done. The Government does not want to make the Board more of a Board, but rather a department, and an effective department, and I believe that will be done by the Bill. What we propose is not to establish in Edinburgh a large anomalous body consisting partly of salaried officials, and partly of gentlemen on whom the public have no hold whatever, but a small body of officials who are responsible to the public for every minute of their time and every ounce of their energy, upon whom we can call, just in the same way as the President of the Local Government Board in London can call upon every gentleman connected with that Department. My right hon. Friend said we have just enough lawyers on the Board of Supervision at present. On the whole department of the London Local Board there is only one legal adviser, as against four on the Scottish Board, and none at all on the Irish Board. I think there is no fear of the Board in Scotland being too much controlled in London as long as the headquarters of the Board are in the capital of Scotland. As long as the work of the Board lies in Scotland, so long it will be a Scottish Board in every particular, with only this difference, that it will be in direct personal relations with the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the composition of the Parish Councils themselves, and took exception to the provision that the members need not be parish electors paying their rates, and that they might be persons resident in the parish or within three miles of the parish, even though they might not be on the parish Register. In this respect we have followed the example of England, and I think very wisely. We have laid down a great principle, and that is that we must choose our electorate very carefully, and see that the people who elect the officers and representatives are people who have a real interest in the locality. But when we have done that, we should give the electors the freest choice possible in the selection of their representatives. We want to enable them to choose, not only the parish electors, but, if they like, the eldest son of the Mayor. The Government likewise wish that they shall be able to elect women to the Parish Councils, and to elect any one from the neighbourhood in whom they have confidence. The Government have given a great deal of consideration to the question of landward parish committees, and the more hon. Members look into our proposals in that direction, the more they will find that the arrangements are practicable and quite defensible. With regard to the question of limit of rating and borrowing, the reasons I have given for imposing no limit are strictly economic reasons. As it is evident that those Scottish Members who are most afraid of extravagance are in favour of a limit of rating, they may be quite certain that the Government will not object to that limit being laid down. As to the limit of borrowing, I hope hon. Members will think twice before they take the English system as compared with that proposed in the Bill. The English proposal is that one-half of the rateable value may be borrowed by the Parish Council. The proposal in this Bill is, that if they borrow more than one-fifth of their rateable value, the Local Government Board should have its say in the matter. In Scotland there are only about 20 parishes, where the amount of the loan exceeds one-tenth of the rateable value, and there are only five parishes where the amount of the loan exceeds one-fifth of the rateable value. I think the proposal of the Bill much better than the English system of allowing borrowing to the extent of one-half of the rateable value. With regard to the Standing Joint Committee, I find myself in rather a difficult predicament. If hon. Members opposite were opposing this Bill on the Second Reading, I should make a long and strong speech in defence of the proposal, but since they do not oppose the Bill on the Second Reading, I am inclined to reserve all my remarks with regard to the Standing Joint Committee for the Committee stage and if necessary Report. I am glad my hon. Friend (Mr. D. Crawford) paid a tribute to the Scottish Office when he said he thought the Bill was well drafted. I could not help thinking that it must be well drafted when it has run the gauntlet of the extremely hard-headed and out-spoken nation for whose benefit it has been drawn. I believe there will be no difficulty in carrying on the work of the Board of Supervision with the Secretary for Scotland as its head. The hon. Member says there is no special provision giving power to the Secretary for Scotland over the deliberations of the Board. In the case of the Fishery Board there is a provision in the Act which sets up that Board distinctly giving the Secretary for Scotland the power of imposing his will on the Board. I do not believe that any such provision is required in the present Bill, which has been drawn very carefully on the analogy of the English and, still more, of the Irish Local Government Act, and no difficulty has been found in the working of these Acts. The President of the Local Government Board and the Chief Secretary for Ireland are as far as they need be masters in their own households, and my belief is that, in all those relations between the person at the head of a Department and those who act with and under him, there is no need to lay down so very strictly that the head of the Department is to be able to impose his will on others. The relations between the chief and his subordinate happily in this country are reasonable relations which need not be too closely defined, and my belief is that if the Secretary for Scotland is a member of this Board he will have precisely the same influence in it as the Irish Secretary has in the Local Government Board in Ireland. On the other hand, the other members of the Board will have their full influence over him, and the decisions they arrive at will be their common decisions influenced, no doubt, by the opinions of the House and the country as conveyed to them through the Parliamentary chief of the Board. Complaints have been made of omissions from the Bill, the most serious of which is in relation to the abolition of the rating qualification of the elector. With regard to that question, I think it may be kept separate from the present Bill. One of the omissions, in the opinion of my hon. Friend, is that the Government have not endeavoured to amalgamate the Board of Lunacy and the Board of Supervision. I believe we should have been travelling outside the province of the Bill if we had endeavoured to amalgamate two such important and incongruous bodies. To break up the Lunacy Board with its local branches would only be to spoil it, and put it under a body which could not carry on the work in so satisfactory a manner. With reference to the administration of the Public Health Act by the Board of Supervision, that might be amended in Committee if the Scottish Members so desire, but I think it is a serious matter to interfere with the incidence of rating. The most serious objection is in regard to leaving the question of education out of the Bill. I do not think the public opinion of Scotland or of the House is so far advanced on this question, and although I am disagreeably disappointed in this respect I do not regret the course the Government have taken. My belief is that if we had mixed up education with the Bill, it would never have been sent to a Standing Committee, as it would have brought out much latent opposition. But I heartily agree with the hon. Gentleman that it would be a very great economy of time, expense, and public energy if in the small and even in the great majority of parishes the Parish Councils had School Board powers. If I had to propose a limit, I should have said 5,000. We should have included 843 out of the 979 School Boards in Scotland; my hon. Friend proposes 7,000, and that would include 50 more, but I do not believe the change can be carried through in this Bill, although this Bill paves the way for such a change. The Bill does away with the difficulty of area, because we set up in every parish a Parish Council, all ready and willing to take over education; in the next place, we set up a landward and burghal committee in all the mixed parishes, so that we should have exactly the same area both for School Board and Parish Council. Wherever there is a *quoad sacra* parish with a School Board, they might arrange for a separate Parish Council, exactly covering the area of the School Board. If the House of Commons is unanimous on this subject, such a Bill can be passed in a week or 10 days without weighting this Bill with the question of education.

*MR. GRAHAM-MURRAY (Buteshire) said, that as it was proposed to set up a new body to perform new and important duties in addition to those hitherto performed by the Board of Supervision the necessity would at once suggest itself without any other reason being prayed in aid, for great care to be exercised in considering the constitution of that new Board. The right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged in the most handsome manner that night as on the occasion of the First Reading the excellent service done by the old Board of Supervision. Some hon. Members who had spoken on the other side of the House had said that the Board had been subjected to much criticism in Scotland; but he thought that the course of the Debate had shown conclusively that the old Board only experienced adverse criticism from those who apparently knew very little about it. The House would do well to recollect what the old Board was, and what its duties were in considering the constitution of the new Board. Like his hon. Friend, he also had been a member of that body for a considerable period in one capacity and another. The hon. Baronet who had spoken had said that the matters which came before the Board of Supervision were Poor Law and sanitary questions. No doubt during the latter years of the Board's existence sanitary questions had taken up much more time than Poor Law questions. Any one who knew anything of the practical working of the Board knew that in process of time, since 1845, the questions cropping up connected with Poor Law administration had become very much narrowed; but he might fairly challenge criticism of what the Board had done. To say that the Board was incompetent to deal with sanitary questions was to use language of gross exaggeration. It had for many years enjoyed the benefit of the very valuable services of Dr. Littlejohn, whose name commanded universal respect, both in Scotland and in this country, as that of a great sanitary expert. There was another aspect of the duties performed by the Board of Supervision in the past, now of course to fall upon this Local Government Board, which might be usefully regarded in considering how best to get a properly qualified Board for dealing with the questions that came before it. Those questions divided themselves under three heads. First, questions of routine. There, of course, the permanent officials of the Board would always be looked to as in the past. Secondly, came questions of law; and, thirdly, what might be called briefly questions of common sense. Speaking on behalf of the lawyers, it was certainly no privilege for a lawyer to be a member of the Board of Supervision, for he could say that in the course of a long professional career he had never done so much work for so little remuneration—English lawyers' hair would stand on end at it. Nobody except those who had been on the Board knew how numerous were the legal questions which came before the Board. Very often a sanitary matter raised a legal question. It was not always merely a question of what was to be done in the interests of sanitary science, but how far Local Authorities could be compelled to do certain things under particular Acts. In such cases it was expedient that the Board should know before entering upon litigation that it was right. No better testimony could be given to the soundness of the advice the Board had had in the past, than to say that it had never, he believed, lost a case. Such a success was only rendered possible by its command of the services of gentlemen who were in touch with the practice in the Courts, for it was one thing to know what the law was, but quite another thing to know what the Judges would decide. What the Department required was practical knowledge. He was very glad, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman had seen fit to place the Solicitor General upon the new Board. Another element of strength upon the old Board was the presence of two country gentlemen, Mr. Dundas, of Arniston, and Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, who were conversant with all matters of county administration, and the withdrawal of this most useful element from the Board could not be contemplated without regret. He concurred with those who disapproved of the appointment of a medical expert as a member of the Board. and would give the reason. He objected to the presence of a medical expert on the Board, because he did not think it advisable that in sanitary matters such an expert should have a vote, and because the new Board would not only have to carry out the duties which had been performed by the Board of Supervision, but would have in many things, apart from sanitary questions, to act almost as a judicial tribunal. For instance, it would have to settle whether landowners were or were not to have their land taken from them for allotment purposes; and a number of judicial questions would come before them which had nothing to do with sanitary matters, and the presence of a medical gentleman without other practical training upon the Board would not add to its usefulness. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would keep those points in view, speaking with no desire to multiply the lawyer element, but simply in favour of the domination of common sense. Leaving the composition of the new body, he would pass to the second portion of the Bill. With regard to the creation of the Parish Councils, dealt with in the second portion of the Bill, he desired first to remark that those Councils were to take up the functions hitherto performed by the Parochial Boards. And here he would repeat in another form what he had said in respect to the Board of Supervision. Practically, no complaint had been made against the old Parochial Boards in so far as the administration of the Poor Law was concerned. Reference had been made to anomalies in the constitution of the Boards, but it had not been shown that those anomalies had affected the actual work of administration. Under the present system safeguards were provided against malversation of funds, in the sense of relief being granted to those who did not require it. But this Bill would effect a great change, and for the first time the administration of relief was to be placed in the hands of persons who would not, to any extent, be spending their own money. There had been bitter experience in Ireland in reference to the improper administration of poor relief, and the point was one which ought not to be disregarded in view of results in the Sister Island. He need not go into old stories on the subject which were familiar to the House, but there had been cases of the kind. It would not do to be entirely optimistic in this matter. There was no possible check against such evils in the present Bill as it stood, and he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that it was absolutely necessary, in fairness to those who had to pay the money which was expended, that some form of appeal should be inserted in the measure, so that any question in regard to the malversation or improper administration of funds might, if necessary, be raised. In England the Local Government Board had large powers over the Boards of Guardians; questions of this kind could be raised on the auditing of accounts, and appeal be thus obtained in case of complaint to the Local Government Board. Similar protection against possible abuse should be provided in the present Bill. Certainly the powers of the Local Government Board over Guardians appeared not to have been touched by the Parish Councils Act recently passed. This point, however, was altogether apart from the question of the rating qualification. He thought the Secretary for Scotland had rather avoided this question, on the ground, as no doubt was the fact, that the Bill did not actually deal with it. In considering this matter of the electorate, however, it was impossible to keep out of view altogether the fact that the Bill was running in parallel lines with another Bill before the House under which rating qualification was to be abolished. Hon. Members on that side of the House wished to accentuate the view that it would be very fatal to allow the qualification for the Parish Council to be unaccompanied by the duty of paying the rates. The hon. Baronet the Member for the College Division of Glasgow had confused the qualifications of the electorate. If the qualification clause were abolished there would be the greatest difficulty in getting the rates paid. He had no hesitation in saying that that would be the case particularly in the Western Highlands, as any one would know who had to do with the collection of rates there. People desired to get upon the roll of the electorate, and that was in many cases the only reason why they now paid their rates. The hon. Baronet's remedy was to make bankrupts of those who did not pay. Was he going to make bankrupt the 25,000 non-payers of rates in Glasgow? He would remind the hon. Baronet of the old saying :—" It is ill to get the breeks off a Hielandman." Another point was that these Parish Councils were given in landward districts certain new powers. Of course, it was quite clear that if new bodies set up in England had certain powers given them, as a matter of precedent analogous bodies in Scotland should be given the same powers, but he desired to enter a protest against being required to take everything as gospel that was to be found in an English Act. There were several provisions which had been simply transcribed from the English Act, and which would work conspicuous injustice if allowed to stand as now drafted in the Bill. Some points which had been hotly discussed last autumn would not be matters of crying or burning importance in Scotland. He might instance the case of the village charities as one example. Some portions of the Bill were models of unintelligibility as they now stood, and some of them would work with conspicuous injustice. It was the duty of the House to see that, when individual rights were dealt with, the Bill was put in such a shape as to do justice to the individual, and that it should contain no unjust provisions. He desired to enter his protest against the view so often put forward that a popularly-elected body could do no wrong as regarded individuals. Instances might arise of sharp antagonism, and it was necessary to have an impartial tribunal in order to do justice. A few questions only remained to be dealt with. He was glad to hear what the right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to the Standing Committee, that it was a controversial question, and that he would keep an open mind in Committee upon the matter. He would therefore defer what he had to say upon that point, the general lines of opposition as it stood having been laid down by preceding speakers. The next point which the right hon. Gentleman would have to consider was what he would do with combinations, otherwise he would get into inextricable confusion in regard to combination parishes. A new Poor Law administration might be given to the combination area. But he presumed that it was not intended to deprive such areas of their right to separate Parish Councils. That matter appeared to have been overlooked, and would require to be carefully considered. He entirely concurred with what the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark had said as to the impracticability of having all the elections on the same day. All the opinions he had heard from persons well qualified to judge in Scotland had been entirely in the contrary direction. One word upon another matter. The Bill proposed for the first time to give to County Councils the right and duty of fighting questions of right of way against proprietors. He would have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to introduce some provision for a preliminary inquiry as to the apparent justice of the case before launching the County Council, with the rates behind it, at the head of an unfortunate landowner. The success of this measure would depend very much on the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman himself when it went upstairs. If he chose to make the Bill a mere bid for popularity by ignoring the wishes, and the just wishes, of those who had a stake in the matter, and subjected them to the iron heel of others who were merely elected, then he would introduce thorny topics which might well wreck the Bill. But, on the other hand, if he did real justice in these matters, there would be no great difficulty in passing this measure.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): We have now had a very full and, upon the whole, an amicable discussion on this Bill. There are other stages of the Bill, and some Motions upon it, and I would, therefore, appeal to the House to allow the Bill to go to a Second Reading.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) said, he did not want to delay the decision, but there was a point as to which he had a Motion on the Paper. The Bill had not been received with any particular enthusiasm either in this House or elsewhere. It would remove some indefensible anomalies, but it lef untouched others of great importance. It left out the question of lunatics in Scotland. In Scotland they had a separate Board for dealing with lunatics. The Lunacy Board, which was apart from the Board of Supervision and the Parochial Boards, in dealing with lunatics had thus to deal with two masters. For general purposes they were under the Board of

Supervision. For this purpose they were under the Lunacy Board. He submitted that in this matter they should be under one Board—the new Local Government Board. The Lunacy Board in Scotland was an irresponsible body, and open to the suspicion arising from irresponsibility, and he thought it would be more important to deal with it in this Bill than with some matters that were dealt with in the measure. As to the rating qualification, it was almost disingenuous of the right hon. Gentleman to pass by that matter so completely. To him this was far the most objectionable matter connected with the whole Bill. If that matter was removed and the present disqualification was to be continued, then he would care comparatively little for any of the other points which had been criticised in the course of the evening. They knew, however, it was the intention of the Government to press forward the Period of Qualification Bill, and therefore they must criticise this Bill as if the non-payment of rates was part of the Bill. According to the statement at Newcastle, it was as if the question was whether people should be disfranchised when their landlord had failed to pay the rates. That might be good enough for Newcastle, but it was hardly good enough for the House of Commons. In the Barony Parish there was over 17 per cent. of defaulters, and the district of Bridgeton, which the Secretary for Scotland represented, had the distinction of having the largest proportion of any. There, 25 per cent. of the electors were disqualified through non-payment of rates. In these parishes it was not a question at all of people being unable to pay rates. The men were those who could pay rates, and would not pay rates. Whatever arguments could be put forward for allowing these men to vote for Parliamentary elections, he did not think there was any one argument that could be put forward for allowing them to vote for the election of bodies whose duty was the dispensing of the rates, except this, that they could not draw a line of distinction between the Parliamentary and municipal elections. He thought that there would be so strong an outcry from all the localities in Scotland on this subject that the Government would find themselves obliged to reconsider the principle altogether. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been present during the evening, and no wonder, on a Scottish Debate; and yet he (Mr. Parker Smith) thought that any one who listened to the Debate would feel that the Members who had spoken were fully conversant with the subjects dealt with by the Bill, and that the Opposition had been extremely generous in not demanding more than one night. He hoped, however, from the tone of the Secretary for Scotland's speech, that they would find him prepared to improve the Bill in Committee.

*SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) said, it did not appear to him that the Bill was received with much favour. In the district which he represented they had been getting on very comfortably without this Bill, and what they were more afraid of was an increase of rates. As to the rating qualification, was it to be supposed that the honest working man would be satisfied if paupers were admitted to the Register? He held that the Government were making a great mistake if they prosecuted this part of the Bill. He admitted that the anomalies in the case of the Parochial Boards were great, but the work of the Boards was good, and although the name of the body would be changed, they would no doubt have very much the same men. With regard to the new Local Government Board, it would never do to have that Board sitting in London. He would like to see that Board have some control over the Lunacy Board, provided the two Boards could not be united. He had had a good deal of local experience in the difficulties of having to deal with the Board of Supervision and the Lunacy Board, and if those Boards could be united, instead of continuing to have a separate jurisdiction, he thought it would be for the good of the country generally. Such a proposal would be so injurious to Scottish interests, and so unpopular, that it could not be hoped that it would be carried out. Some further notice should be taken of the position the Solicitor General occupied. Was he to give his time and talents without any further recompense? He ought to be put on a very different footing. In the last few days the public had had the advantage of seeing the salaries obtained by the other Law Officers of the country, and the public must acknowledge that the Solicitor General was quite underpaid. He should strongly oppose the clause abolishing the Standing Joint Committee.

MR. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) said, the Bill had been received in Scotland practically with apathy. There had not been the slightest enthusiasm in connection with it, and the general opinion was that if it did not do much good, it would not do much harm. Personally, he was not greatly enamoured with the Bill, because he believed the result of it would almost certainly be to increase the local rates. He did not think the proposed composition of the Board was the most satisfactory that could be conceived. There was too much of the official element in it. The Board of Supervision was a distinctly local Board, and had performed its duties satisfactorily. The Board to be created under the Bill would not, he was afraid, be so satisfactory in some respects. He approved of the Secretary for Scotland being a member of the Board, but he thought the composition of the Board otherwise would be better if they were to leave out the Solicitor General for Scotland, the Under Secretary for Scotland, and the medical officer, and substitute for these gentlemen two Sheriffs of experience and two of the most experienced Chairmen of Parochial Boards in Scotland. He thought instead of abolishing the Parochial Boards the Bill should have remodelled them and put them on a more proper basis. In order to prevent anything like fraud or misunderstanding the County Council recommended that every candidate must sign his nomination paper and must not retire without giving notice in writing before the contest commenced. Under the present law a member once nominated for a seat on the County Council could not retire at all, and it was exceedingly desirable that provision should be made to meet the case of a man who wished to retire. A good deal had been said with regard to the fusion of the School Board and the County Council. He had great sympathy with that proposal, and thought it would be a great advantage to introduce education into the Bill. The powers of Parish Councils on the subject of rating and borrowing should be very carefully looked into. With regard to the compulsory acquisition of land, the Selkirk County Council thought that the principle of the Lands Clauses Act should be applied to the Bill, and that when land was taken compulsorily not more than 10 per cent. should be given for it in addition to the valuation. Railway and other public Companies were excluded from the operation of this part of the Bill, and he thought that land attached to business premises should also be excluded from it. It would be a very hard case if land which a man had acquired for the purpose of adding to his works could be compulsorily taken. The Selkirk County Council thought that the proposal to give compulsory power to lease land in the interests of a few was so unsound in principle that the House ought not to agree to it. They also contended that the special parish rate should be limited in extent, and they recommended that 6d. in the £1 should be the outside amount that should be borrowed, and that the rate so levied should be levied equally between landlord and tenant. The borrowing powers for special purposes were in their opinion too vaguely expressed in the Bill, and they held that in no case should such powers exceed one-fifth of the parish rental. As to the abolition of the Standing Joint Committee, which the Selkirk County Council wished to see retained, he did not himself look upon it as a very vital question, because its power was only exercised as far as the police were concerned. It was, however, very desirable that the control of the police should be under a stationary body, and he thought that was the main reason why the Standing Joint Committee should not be abolished. He hoped that the various points he had brought forward would be carefully considered when the Bill reached the Grand Committee.

*DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): As a medical Member, I wish to say a few words——

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

*DR. MACGREGOR: I consider that very shabby conduct, and I resent it.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time," put accordingly, and agreed to."

Bill read a second time.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I now beg to move—

"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Scotch Bills."

*MR. RENSHAW: On a point of Order, Mr. Speaker, ought not the Instructions first to be dealt with?

*DR. MACGREGOR: Would it be in Order, Sir, for me to give notice to amend this Bill in Committee?

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of Order. As regards the Instructions on the Paper, they are all out of Order. The first, standing in the name of the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Provand), is out of Order because it is unnecessary, and what it proposes to do can be done in Committee without an Instruction. The second, standing in the name of the hon. Member for the Partick Division (Mr. Parker Smith), is, I think, outside the scope of the Bill, and should be made the subject-matter of a separate measure dealing with the powers of the Lunacy Commissioners. The third Instruction, standing in the name of the hon. Member for West Renfrew (Mr. Renshaw), is out of Order for the same reason. It should be the subject-matter of a separate and distinct measure. The fourth, standing in the name of the hon. Member for Perth City (Mr. William Whitelaw), is out of Order, because what it proposes to do can be done in Committee, and no Instruction is therefore needed. The fifth, standing in the name of the hon. Member for Crewe (Mr. Walter M'Laren), with regard to which I had some difficulty, is unnecessary, for its object can be carried out in Committee. In the 11th clause of the Bill an Amendment for this purpose could be legitimately introduced without any Instruction. The sixth, standing in the name of the hon. Member for North East Lanarkshire (Mr. Donald Crawford), is out of Order for the same reason that I have given in the case of the third. It is outside the proper scope of the Bill. The seventh Instruction, standing in the name of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark (Mr. Caldwell), is also unnecessary, for its subject can be dealt with in Committee. That disposes of the whole of the Instructions.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Scotch Bills."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton) said, he did not wish to delay the decision of the House upon the Motion, but he felt it necessary to make a few observations. The Opposition had opposed the appointment of the Committee on principles which were made sufficiently clear at the time. Paragraphs, however, which would perhaps have been unworthy of notice had they not been so widely circulated and read, had gone the round of the newspapers to the effect that the Unionist Party in the House of Commons objected so strongly to the appointment of the Scotch Grand Committee that they had resolved to take no part in its proceedings. It was surely hardly necessary to say that, so very far from that being the case, and so very far from their having any objection to the Scottish Grand Committee as a Scottish Grand Committee, the Unionist Scottish Members looked forward with considerable satisfaction to dealing with their own Bills in concert with Members from their own country. It was to the principle of the appointment of the Grand Committee, and not to the proceedings that were likely to take place under it, that the Government had objected. The Secretary for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had the other day claimed the honour of being the father of the Scottish Members on the Ministerial side of the House. He (Sir H. Maxwell) believed he divided with the right hon. Gentleman's brother (Mr. J. A. Campbell) the honour of being the father of the Scottish Unionist Members, and he certainly looked forward to making this Bill in the Grand Committee a thoroughly useful measure.

MR. J. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) asked when it was intended to take the Bill in Grand Committee, and expressed a hope that a reasonable time would be allowed for preparing Amendments.

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I suppose it will rest with the Chairman of the Committee to call it together, and probably to consult the Committee as to the days of the week on which it shall sit. I will try to ascertain who the Chairman will be, and will endeavour to persuade him to give plenty of time for the preparation of Amendments. I suppose we may consider that no meeting of the Committee will take place until the middle of next week.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Scotch Bills.—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

## FATAL ACCIDENTS INQUIRY (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 151.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

*SIR C. PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities) said, it was quite clear there was not sufficient time left for the discussion of the Bill that evening. It was a very important Bill, and yet not a word of explanation had been offered in regard to it. It was the successor of a Bill which was before the House last year, and yet in one important aspect it bore no resemblance whatever to that Bill either as it was introduced or as it left the Standing Committee on Law. As the Bill was introduced last year the Government thought it right that the Sheriff should conduct inquiries into fatal accidents without the aid of a jury. Some of the Members of the Standing Committee thought that there ought to be a jury, but this was opposed by the Government, and the Bill as it left the Committee contained no provision for jury trial. He did not desire it to be understood that he was altogether opposed to inquiries such as were here desired, but he said it was a matter for very grave consideration upon what lines this absolutely new departure in Scotch procedure should be laid down. The Bill was confined to cases of death by accident in the course of industrial employment. He had never yet understood why a public inquiry such as that proposed should be limited to cases of accident in which death had resulted. An accident might cause serious injury to 100 persons without producing any fatal result, and under this Bill no inquiry could be held. He did not see why the measure should be confined to industrial employments, and, on the other hand, he thought it might well be considered whether its scope was not very much too wide. There were many cases of fatal accidents which raised no question of public interest, and where an inquiry would be utterly unnecessary.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

## NOTICE OF ACCIDENTS (EXPENSES.)

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the expenses of the Board of Trade in the execution of any Act of the present Session for providing for notice of and inquiry into Accidents occurring in certain Employments and Industries."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, the Bill to which this Resolution related was passed suddenly and unexpectedly a few nights ago. He did not think the Bill itself was one which any hon. Member in any part of the House desired to prevent passing into law in some shape or other, but there was an important question which arose upon it—namely, the Department which ought to deal with it. Generally speaking, accidents were dealt with by the Home Office, and he thought it would be better if the Bill came under the control of the Home Office rather than the Board of Trade. What he wished to ask was, whether in Committee it would be open to move Amendments directed to the transfer of the conduct of the Bill to the Home Office?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) said, the Bill was introduced by the Board of Trade, and that it had been very carefully considered by the Government. He could not say whether such Amendments as those referred to by the hon. Member could be moved in Committee.

Resolution agreed to.

### SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.
### (No. 214.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Anstruther.*)

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) asked if the hon. Gentleman would tell them what this Bill was ?

***Mr. ANSTRUTHER** (St. Andrews, &c.) said, the Bill embodied principles which had been passed unanimously by the House in the recent Session, and he would appeal to the House to allow the Second Reading in order that the Amendments, if there were any, might be placed on the Paper for the consideration of those who were interested in the matter.

***Dr. MACGREGOR** (Inverness-shire) said, there was a serious defect in the Bill; it did not provide for the travelling expenses of the members on the Board, and he must therefore object to it.

***Mr. ANSTRUTHER** reminded the hon. Member that it was not competent for a private Member to make such provision.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The reason given is not valid, but the hon. Member objects.

**Dr. MACGREGOR**: Certainly.

Objection being taken by other Members; Second Reading deferred till Wednesday, 30th May.

## *MOTIONS.*

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 14) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Walter Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary districts of Blackburn, Blackpool (two), and Stalybridge, and to the rural sanitary district of the Blackburn Union, ordered to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 236.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 15) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Walter Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary districts of Bolton, Brighton, and St. Helens, and to the Wisbech and Walsoken Main Sewerage District, ordered to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 237.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 9) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Morley, Bill to confirm two Provisional Orders made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890," and "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," relating to the urban sanitary district of Dublin, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Morley and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 238.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 10) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Morley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," relating to the urban sanitary district of Larne, ordered to be brought in by Mr. John Morley and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 239.]

### POOR LAW UNION OFFICERS (IRELAND) SUPERANNUATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to make better provision for the Superannuation of the Officers of Poor Law Unions in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Connor, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. John Redmond, and Mr. Farquharson.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 240.]

### POOR LAW GUARDIANS (IRELAND) (WOMEN) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. T. W. Russell, Bill to enable Women to be elected and act as Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir Thomas Lea, and Mr. William Johnston.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 241.]

### WAYS AND MEANS—CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Resolution [21st May] reported;

"That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, the sum of £12,117,630 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

Resolution agreed to:—Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Mellor, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir John Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, 23rd May 1894.*

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL.—(No. 44.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 9th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

*MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) said, he wished to move the omission of Sub-section 2, and his object in doing so was to secure something like uniformity of process in the Criminal Law, and to restrain the introduction into the Bill of principles which it ought not to embody. No alterations ought to be made in the Criminal Law of the country except under the close supervision of the Government, and hence it was he had felt it his duty to bring forward a number of Amendments, many of which he was glad to say had been accepted by Ministers. On others he would have to take the opinion of the House. Some proposals in the Bill were, in his view, altogether subversive of the plain and ordinary administration of justice in this country. Some of the objections he had to make were of a technical character, but surely the Law Officers of the Crown would agree with him in trying to secure simplicity in a law which was largely administered by unpaid Magistrates. Now, the sub-section of which he had to move the omission ran thus—

> "A person may be convicted, either by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction or on indictment, of an offence under Section 1 of the principal Act, notwithstanding the death of the child in respect of whom the offence was committed."

With such a proposal he could not agree. A prisoner ought, he contended, to be entitled to his clear acquittal, and ought not, upon an appeal to the sympathies of the jury, to be convicted on a minor offence upon indictment for a graver one, of which the jury declined to convict him. This sub-section might be erased from the Bill without substantially injuring other provisions contained in it.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, to leave out Sub-section (2).—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2) stand part of the Clause."

SIR R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he sincerely hoped that the Committee would not accept the Amendment. Let the Committee realise what it meant. Where most diabolical cruelty was, as in some cases, committed, and poor unfortunate children had died in consequence, technicalities ought to be, and he hoped would be, swept away. They were now dealing with cases where the Society, the object of which was the prevention of cruelty to children, had not been able to detect the criminal till after the death of the child who had been the subject of ill-treatment. Where a poor child had been done to death, the wrongdoer ought not, on that account, to escape punishment through a mere technicality, but the Criminal Law should be enforced against him.

MR. HOPWOOD said, he must dispute the view put forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he protested against the Bill being supported by constant reference to some Society. Presiding as he constantly did over Criminal Courts he would match his own personal experience against that of the hon. and learned Gentleman or of any Society. He also disputed the hon. and learned Gentleman's law when he said that if a child who had been assaulted died the prisoner got off.

SIR R. WEBSTER, interposing, said that several Magistrates had held that, in proceedings under the principal Act of 1889, where the child was no longer alive the proceedings were barred.

MR. HOPWOOD said, the sub-section went further than the hon. and learned Gentleman had suggested, and he suggested that instead of altering the law the Society to which reference had been made should have endeavoured to secure a reversal of the decision of these Magistrates.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Mr. R. T. REID, Dumfries): It may be that the Amendment is surplusage, but it cannot be held to be undesirable in the circumstances, especially if it be the case that Magistrates have held the view indicated by the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight. As far as the merits of this sub-section are concerned, it seems to me that if an assault has been committed, whether aggravated or not, and a person deserves punishment, and the evidence is sufficient on indictment, it would be outrageous if he escaped punishment because the child upon whom the assault was committed has happened to die in the interval. The section does not offend against common sense or justice, and it certainly does not offend against good law. I therefore intend to vote for it.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. HOPWOOD said, he next had to move the omission of Sub-section (3) as follows :—

> "If upon the trial of any person for murder or manslaughter the jury are satisfied that the defendant is guilty of an offence under Section 1 of the principal Act, but are not satisfied that the defendant is guilty of the murder or manslaughter with which he is charged, the jury may acquit the defendant of the murder or manslaughter, and may find him guilty of an offence under Section 1 of the principal Act, and the defendant, on being so convicted, shall be liable to be punished as if he had been convicted of that offence on an indictment for the same."

While he made no complaint against those who were in charge of the Bill, he did submit that this sub-section effected a very important and, in his opinion, very undesirable change in the Criminal Law. It seemed to him very poor policy to indict a man for murder or manslaughter, and then give him an additional chance of getting off by appealing to the sympathies of the jury to convict him of some minor offence. Further than that, the sub-section was calculated to jeopardise a man's right of acquittal, and that ought not to be allowed by any Government which felt the responsibility of properly maintaining the Criminal Law.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3).—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (3) stand part of the Clause."

*SIR R. WEBSTER said, the sole object of the sub-section was to bring this branch of the Criminal Law into uniformity with that which prevailed in every other branch. If, in the course of a trial for murder, witnesses on oath proved that cruelty to a child had been practised, why should the Court be unable to deal with that offence without necessitating a new trial with all the consequent expense and inconvenience? Some learned Judges had indicated their view in the strongest possible manner that there ought to be such a power to convict, and with all due respect to the hon. Member for Middleton he must say he had put forward an argument which was not entitled to much consideration. He seemed to suggest that if the evidence of murder or manslaughter were defective the person charged should escape scot-free, even if there were abundant proof that he had been cruel to the child. But with such proof, why in the name of common sense should not the man be convicted of and punished for cruelty? Let the hon. Member himself, in the interests of that uniformity of which he was so strong an advocate, apply to this question of cruelty and assaults the principles which had prevailed so long in reference to minor offences.

*MR. HOPWOOD said, he wished the hon. and learned Gentleman had made his references to the Judges a little less vague. Why had he not given them chapter and verse of the expressions of judicial opinion which he had alluded to? When he told the Committee that the object of the sub-section was to secure uniformity he could not agree with him. The law at present did not allow a man to be indicted for one offence and to be convicted of a different one, even if the two offences were part and parcel of the same proceeding. It seemed to him as if the Government had entered into a partnership with the hon. and learned Member opposite to pass the Bill.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.) said, there was certainly no partnership with regard to the Bill between the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight and the Government, but the Government were satisfied that the amendment of the law proposed in this sub-section was entirely right. If forgery were found under a charge of assault, he could see the force of the objection raised by the hon. Member for Stockport; but were they to let a man off from a minor offence falling within the same class as a graver one merely because the evidence, while establishing the minor, was hardly sufficient to make good the graver charge?

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed, in line 27, to leave out the word "able," and insert the word "liable."

Amendment agreed to.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.) said, the hon. Member for the Middleton Division might be re-assured as to the partnership he suspected to exist between the Government and the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight, as in regard to this clause they were of opinion that it ought to be omitted altogether. The subject ought to be dealt with in an Inebriates Bill, and such a Bill was at this moment being drafted. He submitted that the whole subject was outside the purview of the Bill, and he therefore moved its omission.

Moved, "To leave out the Clause."—(*Mr. George Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. HOPWOOD was glad to find he had the support of the Government in opposing the clause, which struck him as being a monstrous proposal.

*SIR R. WEBSTER said, he would not comment on his hon. Friend's reference to a partnership between himself and the Government, but he did wish to thank right hon. Gentlemen opposite for giving a candid consideration to the provisions of the Bill, which there was a general desire to see passed. As to this particular question, he asked the House to consider the question on its merits. It was no answer to say that the subject ought to be dealt with in a Bill which had not even yet been introduced. Certainly they were told that a Bill was being drafted, but it might be that the drafting alone would occupy a couple of years. He had no desire to introduce anything of an acrimonious character into the Debate, but he would remind the Under Secretary to the Home Office that last year he was induced by the Home Secretary to withdraw a similar clause on the same ground; but the Bill had not yet been produced—it had been found that one of the principal causes of cruelty had been occasioned by habitual drunkards; and the section gave Magistrates the power of sending such persons to an Inebriates' Home rather than damn them with the status of criminals by sending them to a prison. He did not know that a Home for Inebriates was morally much better than a prison, but still he thought that hon. Members would prefer to give Magistrates this power. Magistrates were unwilling to give long sentences in these cases, but they felt strongly the advantage that persons charged would derive from a lengthened period of control. He could give plenty of instances of persons acknowledging the benefit of lengthened confinement, if it were necessary. A Departmental Committee sat in 1893, and they recommended that power should be given to Magistrates to commit to a retreat persons coming within the definition of habitual drunkards, and that reformatory institutions should be provided for their reception. The general observation that the Government intended to bring in a general Bill dealing with the whole question was no answer. The proposed power of Magistrates would only be optional, and in many cases it would prevent persons from being sent to prison. He would be perfectly willing to insert an Amendment providing that the Magistrate should only exercise his option in cases where there were persons willing to pay the expense. He submitted that this was only a reasonable amendment of the law.

MR. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he would be very sorry to say a word which would take from the good effect of this Bill, which he believed was very much needed, but he wished to explain why he should vote against the clause. The proposal was that a person convicted of cruelty to children should, at the option of the Magistrate, be sent either into a retreat or the workhouse, if he was an habitual drunkard. These retreats had been established by Act of Parliament, the whole policy of which was to induce habitual drunkards to undergo a period of medical treatment, not by anybody's order, but of their own free will. The proposal was to send persons convicted of a criminal offence to associate with innocent persons, who were in retreat for purposes of reclamation only. Was it fair to treat people in that way? Would it be an inducement to innocent persons to go into a retreat? The same argument applied to the workhouse. Surely it was rather hard on the inmates that they should have these people sent amongst them. He did not think it was right that retreats and workhouses should be polluted by the presence of persons whose proper treatment was punishment.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said, he felt very strongly on this subject, and sympathised very much with the object of the clause. With reference to the voluntary retirement of habitual inebriates into these retreats, it must be obvious to everybody that the worse they were the less likely they were to go voluntarily into such places. They must all in the course of their lives have seen painful cases in connection not only with the working classes, but the upper classes. The Under Secretary to the Home Office offered for this clause some Bill at a future time, but he thought that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush. With regard to the question of the hardship to the poor in workhouses in thrusting these people upon them, he himself had had some experience of workhouses, and he was sorry to say that a large number of the inmates were there for the same cause, directly or indirectly, and, therefore, the punishment would not be so great.

Dr. R. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said, that if the hon. Member went to a Division he should certainly support him. It was all very well to say that a Bill was going to be introduced by the Government, but the business of the House was very much congested now, and there might be no opportunity of bringing the Bill before the House. In his opinion, there was no reason why this measure of relief should not be passed now.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that this was a clause substituting a retreat for a prison, and he should have thought the hon. and learned Member for Middleton would have welcomed such a proposal. The statement that the Government had a Bill in hand was really no argument against the present Bill. A Roman Catholic priest of some distinction in Liverpool, in recently opening a home, described it as

> "a refuge for poor men and women who seemed to have a cross in their nature which prevented them from taking care of themselves."

That description applied exactly to these asylums. If the Government did not fully approve of the Bill now before the House, it could subsequently be amended according to their view. The Government had the matter entirely in their own hands. He himself did not see any reason why this proposed improvement in the law should not be effected.

Mr. R. T. REID thought it would be very desirable if some means of coming to an arrangement on this matter, before the Report stage, could be devised. He would, therefore, suggest the withdrawal of the Amendment, and leave the matter open to be dealt with on Report.

*Mr. HOPWOOD said, the Bill required a considerable amount of amendment before it could be regarded as satisfactory. Under this clause a man might be hurried out of his liberty and out of his rights without a proper trial if, in the view of two Magistrates, he was an habitual drunkard. No evidence would be necessary on the point, although such a charge ought to be proved beyond doubt. If the Government attempted to alter the clause they must make the measure an Habitual Drunkards Bill, and it was absolutely necessary that proper time and attention should be devoted to the question before the House parted so cheerily as it frequently did with a matter which affected individual liberty.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central) remarked, that the clause would convert the workhouse and the asylum into what would be practically prisons, and, that being so, he thought it would be almost impracticable to work it. A workhouse could not be really converted into a prison. There was also the argument of injustice to bear in mind. There was a very large number of persons in workhouses who had got there through misfortune, and it would not be fair to make them consort with persons who had been guilty of serious crimes, and also of habitual drunkenness. He hoped, therefore, that the promoters of the Bill would consent to modify this portion of the measure.

Sir R. WEBSTER said, he accepted most gratefully the suggestion that the Amendment should be withdrawn. He must, however, point out that the Bill imposed no compulsion whatever with reference to sending offenders to workhouses, and that unless the Local Government Board acted upon the subsection it would have no effect. The Government did not appear to be correctly informed as to what the practice was. As a matter of fact, a considerable number of workhouses received habitual drunkards, and dealt with them especially. In some London workhouses habitual drunkards were treated either in the imbecile ward or in the infirmary. If the subject were, therefore, considered by the Government, they would see that the promoters of the Bill were not proposing any such drastic change as that of the intrusion among ordinary paupers of persons who were either criminals or were not fit to consort with the ordinary occupants of a workhouse. The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) would find, if he would look into the matter, that to a very large extent habitual drunkards were, under the existing law, kept actually under control, and could not leave the institutions in which they were confined without an order of the Justices. He entirely agreed, however, with the right hon. Gentleman that, if the subject appeared to need more careful consideration, an opportunity ought to be given for such consideration. He (Sir R. Webster) would be willing to add a proviso to the effect that the subsection should apply where a person came forward and offered to pay for the maintenance of an habitual drunkard in an imbecile ward. This would meet the case of a husband desiring his wife or a wife desiring her husband to be kept for a time under control.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) wished to know how the question of an offender being an habitual drunkard was to be brought in? The question before the Court would be that of cruelty to a child. Was a charge of habitual drunkenness to be sprung upon a man or woman who was brought before the Court on the charge of cruelty, and what evidence was to be admitted? It was perfectly obvious that the prisoner was to be tried for one offence, and was not to be punished for that offence, as he ought to be, but was to be punished for an offence which was not an offence at all in the eyes of the law—namely, that of being an habitual drunkard. It seemed to him that the late Attorney General (Sir R. Webster) had been reading a book called *Hereward*, which explained that the proper treatment of criminals was to put them into a hospital, and that the proper treatment of persons who were ill was to send them to prison. He knew nothing so odious as the ill-treatment of children, especially by their parents; and he did not see why a person who was convicted of that odious crime should be allowed, because he or she happened to have some money, to escape the disgrace of being sent to prison in order that the credit of the family might be maintained. A working man, of course, or a working woman could not find the money to pay for the luxury of keeping the wife or husband in an asylum. It appeared that a sentence of 12 months' imprisonment might be inflicted upon a person who had been found guilty of perhaps a trifling case of cruelty to a child. It seemed to him that this would provide a most convenient way of getting rid of a husband or wife. Surely the common-sense way of dealing with cases in which husbands and wives found themselves unable to live with one another was to grant them a divorce, and not to give one of the two an opportunity of sending the other to prison for a year. He hoped that if the Government consented to a clause of this kind in any form whatever they would safeguard it with far more stringent provisions than the proposers of the Bill seemed disposed to adopt.

Mr. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) said, the criticisms which had been passed upon the clause seemed to show that it needed remodelling, but he trusted that the promoters of the Bill would adhere to its main provisions. Under the principal Act the punishment that might be imposed was imprisonment with or without hard labour for two years, and this clause would afford an opportunity of diminishing the punishment if necessary. He did not agree with his hon. Friend in the view that the clause should be omitted altogether, and for the reason that injustice was safeguarded against in the clause itself. These safeguards also removed the objection of his hon. and learned Friend, that a person might be convicted of being an habitual drunkard without satisfactory evidence being laid before the Court. One word about the workhouses. He quite agreed that the workhouses should not be made prisons; but he was not sure that in the case of habitual inebriates they were not sometimes sent to lunatic asylums to remain there at the discretion of the superintendents of those asylums. They were driven by drink into acts of madness, and when sent to an asylum under a charge of insanity they were detained there for a length of time that was regulated by the circumstances of the case. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would press the clause in its main provisions; and instead of, as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General supposed, the provision being beyond the scope of the Act, it appeared to him a provision absolutely essential to the completion of the provisions which the Act contained. The cause of cruelty to children was not because men and women were born without paternal and maternal instincts, but because those instincts were destroyed by drink. It was therefore desirable that any Act dealing with the prevention of cruelty to children should deal, as far as possible, with the prevention of the causes that led to cruelty.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said that, as this Bill extended to Ireland, he wished to point out that if it was to be carried out the Government ought to vote £50,000 a year to the Irish workhouses, otherwise a very great increase would be added to the rates. What they would have to do would be to turn every workhouse into a prison, and let them see what the cost of that would be. They would have to have two special warders for the males, and if there were any female inebriates they would have two matrons, and the cost of these people and the other arrangements they would have to make would be at least £500 a year for each workhouse, and then the duties would not be properly done, for the workhouses were not suitable for what they were proposing to do. They were going to entirely change the character of every workhouse in the country, and in the course of doing so they would have to build fresh walls, have separate wards, provide attendants, and lock all the doors; and if the Government consented to pass a Bill of that kind, they should be prepared to vote an extra £50,000 a year towards the increased cost that would be thrown upon the Irish workhouses.

*MR. CROSFIELD (Lincoln) said, he wished to support this clause, and in what he had to say he desired to devote himself to Sub-section 2. The hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had probably not spent so much of his time as some of the rest of them had done in workhouses, or else the hon. and learned Gentleman would, from the clearness of his intellect, have detected the weakness of the arguments he had offered to the Committee. From his experience of workhouses it appeared to him to be utterly impossible for the clause to work in the way in which it was presented to the Committee. Under existing arrangements they could not detain anyone in the workhouse unless suffering from *delirium tremens*, or so ill that the doctor prohibited removal from the hospital. He had had considerable experience of passing lunatics from hospitals to asylums, and he would venture to correct a remark made by the hon. Member for Heywood (Mr. Snape), and he would say that those who were incarcerated in workhouses because of *delirium tremens* or any form of imbecility arising from drink could only be detained for a very limited period, they must be passed on to a certified lunatic asylum, or be discharged. The workhouse could not be dealt with as a lunatic asylum, and therefore, if Sub-section 2 was retained, he hoped it would be amended so as to make it applicable in the sense in which the Local Government Board would desire to have it.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, he thought that every lover of children was indebted to the hon. and learned Gentleman who had introduced the Bill, and he hoped that in its main features it would pass into law this Session. He trusted that in trying to pass it the main objects would be adhered to—namely, first, the prevention of cruelty, and then the punishment of those who were responsible for such cruelty. He thought the hon. and learned Gentleman would do well to take the advice of the Solicitor General and withdraw the clause, and between now and the Report stage consider if such a clause was necessary in face of the Bill they were promised. He wished to point out that the more educated the habitual drunkard was the more cruel his conduct was. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] It was so; and it was proved to be so in Ireland in a remarkable way some months ago. But let them take two cases: the case of a scavenger who had a drunken wife who illtreated her children. If she was taken to the Police Court the Magistrate would sentence her to imprisonment. If they had a State retreat to which they could send both the rich and the poor, he would vote for this clause, but that was not the case, and, consequently, what would happen? Take the other case: that of a Vestry clerk, whose wife maltreated her children. When she was taken to the Police Court, she would have the best counsel to defend her, and the Magistrates—they were but human, and were open to local influence—would think she was too good, too respectable a person to be sent to prison, and they would give her the option of going to a retreat. Assuming the Magistrates gave the option of retreat to the poor woman, her husband would not be in a position to pay 30s., or what was more probable £3, a week to keep his wife in a retreat. They might be told the man had the choice of the workhouse. Any man who had considered the question knew that at the present moment every Board of Guardians throughout the country was considering the question of the classification of paupers as a means of keeping the honest poor from the criminal poor. But this proposition, what would it do? It would consign all criminals convicted of cruelty into the workhouse because they had not the means to go to a retreat. That was not fair. In the first place, they would be contaminating the other inmates. They might say they would be sent to the workhouse infirmary. But that would be worse, because the infirm poor were in a more susceptible condition than the able-bodied and healthy poor, and under this clause they proposed to send them either to the workhouse or to the infirmary. Some said the prison was too severe. He was inclined to admit it, as all prisons were not administered in the best form. But, under present circumstances, what did they find? That the Home Office was considering the question of the classification of criminals so as to keep the utterly degraded from those less degraded with the view of deterring crime permanently, and it seemed to him there should be only one alternative to the prison—namely, the asylum; that they should not be sent either to the workhouse or the infirmary, but should have the option of going to prison or the ordinary lunatic asylum, where they could be isolated from other criminals or other lunatics. They might be kept apart in the dangerous wards, and consequently there would be no bad effect so far as contaminating others was concerned. Apart from that, he looked upon this clause as a middle-class habitual drunkard's relief clause, and he appealed to the hon. and learned Gentleman in this particular Bill not to press this particular clause. If he did he would find he would get more opposition to it on the Report stage than he contemplated. In the interests of even-handed justice and equal treatment of rich and poor criminals alike let them have no option except as between the criminal prison and the lunatic asylum.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5.

*Mr. HOPWOOD presumed the Government had made up their minds to give this additional power to the Magistrates to make it six months instead of three. He would recall the facts to the Committee. When the former Bill was passed, which was not so long since, three months was considered enough power to put into the hands of the Magistrates, but now it was to be increased to six months. By Sub-section 2 power was given to send to penal servitude for five years. There was an idea in some minds that the only way to put down crime was to pile up the punishment. He considered that was an erroneous idea, and he thought it was unnecessary to pile it up in this matter. He knew that some people looked on the question of cruelty to children as the justifying red-handed vengeance which was not punishment by law. Everyone agreed that the best mode of restricting crime was to detect it, and that this society thoroughly did, and they had rendered most admirable service in that way. He should be sorry to do anything to restrict that, and to-day he was not doing more than standing up for something like an adjustment of the Criminal Law as he understood it; therefore, he would not do more than move the rejection of Clause 5.

Amendment proposed, page 2, to leave out Clause 5.—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 5 stand part of the Bill."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, that all he wished was for the Bill to pass and become law, and he therefore hoped that the discussion would be limited as much as possible. The hon. and learned Gentleman had dealt with the sub-section, and he (Sir R. Webster) would point out that now in the case of assaults upon children the punishment was six months. There would be this further advantage in making the law uniform: that there would be given the right of trial by jury, so that the case could be determined not by the Magistrate, but by a jury, as the accused person would have the right to claim a trial by jury if he considered he was otherwise likely to be prejudiced. The hon. and learned Gentleman had not dealt with the other sub-sections, his opposition being directed to the first subsection, and therefore he (Sir R. Webster) would not go into the other matters.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 6.

*Mr. HOPWOOD said, this clause ran thus—

> "If any person having the custody, charge, or care of a child allows that child to be in any street, premises, or place for any purpose which in reference to the street, premises, or place is forbidden by or in pursuance of section three of the principal Act as amended by the Act, that person shall be liable to the like penalties as if he had caused that child so to be in such street, premises, or place."

Section 3 of the principal Act applied to light and petty offences, but what he objected to was the word "allow." The child might be allowed in the streets for a certain time, but if the child did something more then the mother or father would be liable. What he contended was that there should be proof that the mother and father so conducted themselves in regard to the child that there was an intention and wish that the child should offend in the manner pointed out by the Act. The mere "allowing" seemed to him to be the mildest form in which a criminal act had been allowed to be couched in any law. If a child was allowed to run the streets, from that might be interpreted a charge of some offence having been committed. In London and large towns the streets were the natural playgrounds of the children, the parents having to toil all day for their maintenance. He therefore beg to move the insertion of the word "knowingly" after the word "child."

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 10, after the word "child," to insert the word "knowingly."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'knowingly' be there inserted."

Sir R. WEBSTER thought the hon. and learned Gentleman had a little forgotten the original provisions of Section 3; they were not directed against preventing the child selling in the streets or going out, but against begging on licensed premises, and the House passed that Act after full discussion. Some of the Magistrates had held that in order to be an offence under the section there must be proof of special command that the child was to go out and do the act arrived at by Section 3. Others had held that it was sufficient if the child was under the control of the parents and yet was found so committing the offence. The hon. and learned Gentleman sought to put in the word "knowingly," but he (Sir R. Webster) should have thought the Magistrate would so construe the clause. It was not desirable to put in such words, as it raised the presumption that they had to have imperative evidence of a command or direction. Knowing how the Criminal Law was administered, he thought it was better to leave it to the discretion of the Magistrates, who were trained men.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland) said, he was sorry to intervene for a moment in apparent opposition, but he shared to some degree the views of his hon. and learned Friend, and he wished to direct attention to the same point. Under this Bill the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was going to subject a poor widow woman, for instance, to punishment if she allowed a boy under 14 or a girl under 16 years of age to sell in the streets for her profit. Under the original Act it provided that an outsider so acting should be liable to punishment; but the Bill of the hon. and learned Member went much further and absolutely said that a poor widow, striving to keep herself and her family out of the workhouse, if she sent her boy under 14 or her girl under 16——

SIR R. WEBSTER: That is an offence at the present moment.

MR. STOREY: For the woman?

SIR R. WEBSTER: May I point out that if the woman sends the child out to do one of the acts mentioned in the section it is an offence.

MR. STOREY said, the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to go further, because if a widow woman, striving to keep herself and family off the rates, sent her child into the streets to sell, the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed that such a woman should be liable to punishment. He called that tyranny, and not legislation. If the woman sent out her child for any other purpose which the Act forbade he should be entirely at one with the hon. and learned Gentleman; if, for instance, she sent the child into licensed premises for the purpose of appearing at entertainments or playing after certain hours, he thought, in the interests of the child itself, it should be constrained; but the proposition went much further, and interfered with the liberty of the subject to too great an extent, and it was from that point of view that he protested against the clause. If a widow allowed her child to sell in the streets between the hours of 9 at night and 6 in the morning that woman was to be treated as a criminal. If they did this then they were going to subject a large number of persons to punishment. They would be surprised at the multitude of poor women who made a very decent living by the sale of newspapers. There was an absolute business in it, and to his knowledge in some of the large towns there were numerous families where the mother—a widow—and her children managed at certain hours to make enough to keep the family going and relieve themselves from the necessity of going to the workhouse.

SIR R. WEBSTER: What hours?

MR. STOREY said, that those who sold newspapers must sell them when they were published.

SIR R. WEBSTER said, that in the interest of time he would point out they were not really altering the law in that respect. The prohibition now was between 10 o'clock at night and 5 o'clock in the morning, and they proposed to make the hours between 9 and 6.

MR. STOREY said, the Act fixed the hours between 10 and 5, but the Bill now proposed that a mother should be punished if she allowed the child to sell newspapers after 9 o'clock at night and before 6 in the morning. Thousands of persons—and he spoke of what he knew of his own knowledge—in various large towns, families with widows at the head, who managed to keep their families together and earn an honest and respectable livelihood by the sale of newspapers. Therefore, he said that to subject such women to the proof that they did not allow their children to sell at five minutes past 9 o'clock at night or five minutes before 6 o'clock in the morning was a most unreasonable way of dealing with the matter. He agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman they should prevent mothers from sending their children to do work that might injure or have a bad moral effect upon them, but he held they should not throw any unnecessary impediment in the way of poor people earning a decent and honest livelihood.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he quite agreed with his hon. and learned Friend that great care had been taken in passing this clause. He could inform him that the question of selling newspapers by children was year after year before the Police and Sanitary Committee, on which he was then taking an active part, and it was then stated that it was a flagrant evil. The clause of 1889 was, in effect, simply placing in the general Statute what was placed year after year in local Acts. He was aware of the arguments as to virtuous parents, but they unfortunately had parents who were not virtuous. Then there was the further consideration that great demoralisation arose from girls being in the streets for any purpose whatever at a late hour.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said, that whenever there was an attempt to impose upon parents parental responsibility there was always one creature introduced to evoke public sympathy and sentiment, and that was the poor lone widow who was supporting children of immature years and uncertain habits. He trusted the House would not be influenced by the sentimental appeal that had been made. What did this Bill say? That between 9 o'clock at night and 6 in the morning people should be prohibited from doing certain things approved by the House on a former occasion. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) seemed to imply that a crowd of children, most of them barefooted, which he saw with sorrow collected at many newspaper offices, were little angels. That was not so, he was convinced. At Victoria and other London railway stations they would see scores of little fellows at 9, 10, and 11 o'clock at night asking them to buy a last copy of the paper they might have in their hands, and possibly the money so earned went in drink—or worse. It seemed to him they had no right to affirm the principle the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) wanted them to affirm—namely, to spoil the child for the purpose of saving the rates. If these mothers could not live without debauching their children, both morally and physically, it was better they should have outdoor relief. Was it not hypocrisy for them to pass Factory Acts restricting the labour of adults to eight hours; was it not mere cant to press upon the Government the necessity of reducing the hours worked in Government workshops to eight per day, and yet to give a drunken mother the right to send her child on to the streets of any large town to hawk papers at 9 and 10 o'clock at night, when the child and its mother ought to be in bed? He hoped the Government would respond to the appeal of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and prevent children from being so treated.

Mr. R. T. REID said, he was going to vote for this clause as it stood. So far as this point was concerned, it had been provided for already by previous Acts, and the same penalty was imposed upon the person who allowed, as upon the person who caused, the child to do these things. What he was about to say now was a matter that would be better considered on Report, but it arose on this clause. He understood his hon. and learned Friend meant that the ages to be dealt with in this section should correspond with the ages dealt with in the principal Act. [Sir R. Webster: Certainly.] He doubted whether that was so; but if anything was wrong it could be put right on Report.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, he would like to ask one question as to the construction of the section. He ventured to think there was great danger in introducing the word "allow" instead of "cause," and that in doing so they were altering the law in this way: If a parent caused his child to be out at night, surely the child was breaking the law with the intention of the parent; but assuming the child to be sent out with directions to be home by 9 o'clock, and that child remained out in the streets after 9 o'clock, the crime was committed, but there could be no intention on the part of the parents. As the clause stood, unless they inserted the word "knowingly" or the word "willingly," it was obvious that the parent who let the child go out would be convicted, though he was entirely innocent of any offence.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.) said, the idea, as he understood the clause, was that they were dealing with the case of children who were or ought to be under control. He disagreed with those who thought the onus was on the parent; it must be proved that the child was there with the allowance of the parent; and, therefore, he could not see that the case suggested by the hon. and learned Member would arise.

*Mr. HOPWOOD said, it was the duty of the House of Commons to place legislation on the Statute Book which should not be capable of misconstruction. If it was liable to misconstruction, the attention of the Law Officers ought to be called to it and the matter made plain. What could be the objection to putting in the word "knowingly"? By the word "allowing," however innocent a mother might be, and her child had gone and done something in the street which was prohibited by this Bill, the mother would be held to have brought herself within the scope of the measure, and would be liable to punishment. It seemed to him that the advocates of improvement in the law relating to this subject would bring such law into discredit if they forced it to these extraordinary lengths.

*MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) said, he entirely supported the view of this clause that was taken by the Member for Middleton (Mr. Hopwood). It seemed to him a matter for rejoicing that they had got in the House of Commons in these degenerate days one or two Members who stood up for personal liberty. The tendency of modern legislation seemed to him to be somewhat to restrict liberty; and when they found a Member like the Member for Battersea (Mr. J. Burns) joining with what he might call the more reactionary Members in grandmotherly legislation, he felt a little satisfaction in relying on the strong common sense and individualism of his hon. Friend (Mr. Hopwood). The hon. Member for Battersea had referred to the Factory Acts, but this was surely not a case on all-fours with the Factory Acts.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I wish it was.

MR. BYLES: A father or mother who allowed a child to sell newspapers on the street after 9 o'clock was not at all in the position of an employer who forced a person to do work after 6 o'clock. If anybody should be punished for the selling of newspapers it should not be the parent who allowed the child to sell, but the newspaper proprietor or the agent who employed the child, or the consumer who purchased the paper. That, he believed, was adequately provided for by the existing legislation. What was now professed was that a poor woman who was earning a miserable pittance should be punished for sending her children into the streets to sell articles if they sold them after 9 o'clock. How could her children be prevented from straying on the streets? and if they did, why should the onus or proof be thrown on the parent? If she could not give proof of the express command that she told her child to come home at night she was to be made a criminal. He thought they were going a very long way in this House when they attempted to restrict the liberty of people to this extent. It was a bad thing that poor children should sell on the street. He agreed that their mothers or fathers should be able to earn sufficient wages and get a sufficient portion of the wealth which their labour created to make it unnecessary that they should send their children into the streets or anywhere else to earn money. But that was not the case now, and in the meantime his experience tallied with his hon. Friend (Mr. Hopwood). He agreed that in the North of England there were many parents whose income was small and perhaps was badly spent, but that was no justification for this House to interfere. He knew very many cases where it was almost necessary—in fact, perhaps, absolutely necessary—in order to keep starvation away from the door to send children to sell newspapers or other articles on the street. To propose to extend the restriction which already existed and make the hours include the hours from 9 to 10, and the hours from 5 to 6, was certainly, in his judgment, an unwarrantable interference with personal liberty.

MR. SNAPE said, in his opinion the Bill would be incomplete unless the hon. and learned Gentleman adhered to this portion of the clause. It was obvious that if the word "knowingly" or "wilfully" were introduced, as suggested by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hopwood), it would make the clause altogether null and void, because it would be absolutely impossible to prove that any mother "wilfully" or "knowingly" had permitted her child to be out at those hours. The Bill was intended to prevent cruelty to children, and some of the most painful and demoralising forms of cruelty to children were those which took the shape of permitting them to be out after 9 in the evening, professedly selling matches, newspapers, and other things. He could speak from his own experience that going home late at night, when snow covered the ground, he had seen barefooted children huddled in doors and corners professedly out selling papers. If mothers and parents could not make a living without inflicting such cruelty on their children as that, it was time that such a form of making a livelihood should be prevented.

Mr. STOREY wished to reiterate that there were in this country families not to be numbered by thousands, nor by tens of thousands, of decent women who did not send their children into the street to work for them, but who, in the legitimate way of trade, took a certain area in the town for the supply of newspapers, but personally, for want of strength or want of time, could not cover the district themselves. He was taking the hours from 5 to 6 and from 9 to 10. They were not drunken people or people who made their children work for them, but women, such as he had instanced, who, with the aid of their children—boys of 14 and girls of 16, say—took an area of a town and distributed papers within the hours when they must be delivered to be of use to the people who bought them. These children got home after their work at a decent time; they were under good care, and lived respectably and comfortably without their parents going for outdoor relief or asking for any assistance. Why should they make it criminal for the people to do this, because that was what they were invited to do. But what was more, they might say it was not criminal between 8 and 9—for the last editions were published at 8—at 5 minutes to 9 it was not criminal, but at 5 minutes past 9 it became criminal. Why should they make it criminal? The fact of the matter was, that in the desire to be kindly they sometimes fell into the fault of being tyrannical; and the great misfortune of the original Act was that it coupled together things which were so dissimilar. If a parent sent his or her children into the streets for the purpose of begging or receiving alms, punish that; or if he sent them into the street under the pretence of singing and playing and performing, punish that; but to go and couple with these things the persons who were legitimately doing their little best to keep a house over their heads by offering anything for sale was no sufficient justification to say there were certain persons who abused it. He said, punish those guilty of such abuses, but do not interfere with the people who honestly wanted to make a living. He should support the proposal of his hon. Friend.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 27; Noes 130.—(Division List, No. 49.)

Mr. SNAPE said, that in Section 6, page 3, line 12, he desired to move to insert after the word "Act" the words—

> "But not excepting premises licensed for public entertainments according to law."

The words of the principal Act exempted premises licensed according to law for entertainments, and the effect of that exemption was that a large number of public houses which had obtained licenses could employ children in entertainments. These were premises of the very character it was sought to deal with. He had no desire to prejudicially affect theatres, and the fact that the Amendment would apply to them was the difficulty he had to contend with. He thought, however, that even in theatres care should be taken that young children should be employed, if employed at all, before the prohibited hour of 9 o'clock. If words were suggested to protect theatres he should not object to their insertion in the Amendment. His object was to prevent the employment of children of tender years in low class public-houses licensed for entertainments where such employment was often of a most demoralising character.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 12, after the word "Act," to insert the words—

> "But not excepting premises licensed for public entertainments according to law."—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, the Amendment as it was proposed would not affect the object the hon. Member had in view; therefore, it would seem desirable that it should be withdrawn and brought up again on Report. The effect of it would be that only the person allowing the child to appear would be affected and not the person causing the offence. It would be necessary to have a new clause amending the sub-section in the original Act; and he should be happy to consider such a clause if it were brought up on the Report stage.

Mr. SNAPE said, he would adopt the hon. and learned Gentleman's suggestion. He had made the proposal last year, and the hon. and learned Gentleman had accepted it, though, he admitted, it was then submitted in a different form.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. SNAPE said, he would move to add at the end of Sub-section 1 the words—

"The principal Act shall be amended, by the substitution of the word 'twelve' for the word 'ten' in the first line of Clause 3."

The words of the principal Act which this would amend were—

"Causing or procuring any child of the age of ten years to be at any time in any street for purposes prohibited by this Act."

The age of 10 appeared to him to be too young, and he would propose that the same age should be adopted as was suggested with reference to children in ordinary employments which did not expose them to cruelty.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 17, after the word "accordingly," to insert the words—

"The principal Act shall be amended by the substitution of the word 'twelve' for the word 'ten' in the first line of Sub-section (*c*) Clause 3."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, he would ask the hon. Member to pursue the same course in regard to this Amendment as he had done in regard to the last. He had not had an opportunity of considering the proposal. He should agree to any reasonable suggestion for raising the age if, after consideration, it seemed to him necessary.

Mr. JOHN BURNS asked whether the Amendment would have the sympathetic concurrence of the hon. and learned Gentleman if it were postponed until the Report stage?

Sir R. WEBSTER said, he could not commit himself to a specific pledge; but he would consider the matter.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. SNAPE said, he desired to move an Amendment to Sub-section 6, which stood as follows:—

"Section 3 of the principal Act shall not apply in the case of any occasional sale or entertainment the net proceeds of which are wholly applied for the benefit of any school or to any charitable object."

He proposed to insert after the word "entertainment" the words—

"Not held on any premises or place licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors."

Amendment proposed, to insert after the word "entertainment," the words,

"Not held on any premises or place licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors."—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, he agreed with the purport of the Amendment, but if the words now proposed were adopted they might have to be amended on Report. It might have a wider effect than was intended. For instance, such concerts or entertainments might take place in theatres which were licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors. It would be advisable, therefore, to postpone the Amendment until the Report.

Mr. R. T. REID said, he also would urge the hon. Member to postpone the matter, as the words of the Amendment were not on the Paper, and they required to be considered.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): said, the hon. Member was between the upper and nether mill-stone of the two Front Benches. If he intended to make a stand at all he (Mr. Russell) would advise him to do it now.

*Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he would remind the hon. Member (Mr. Russell) of the acute controversy they had in 1889 on the questions surrounding the employment of children in the theatres. He thought that to introduce this Amendment without notice, or even on short notice, would be unfair to managers of theatres.

Mr. SNAPE said, that under the circumstances he was disposed to accept the counsel of his hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone. The case would be different if his proposal required careful consideration; but it was so simple that he could not see why it should not be adopted at once.

Sir R. WEBSTER said, that Sub-section 6 only applied to occasional sales or entertainments. In villages the room attached to the public-house might be the only place where such a sale or entertainment could be held. If the Amendment were adopted it would have to be amended on Report, in order that the exceptions which might arise should be dealt with.

Mr. SNAPE said, he knew that the sub-section only applied to occasional entertainments, but they knew that Magistrates were often so ill-advised as to grant licences for professedly charitable objects under circumstances that must be contrary to the intentions of the Act.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7.

*MR. HOPWOOD said, that Sub-section 1 was a step in advance towards interference with personal liberty which had never been taken before. A constable or any subject of Her Majesty could arrest a person who had committed a felony, but for a constable to arrest a person for a misdemeanour he must be himself a witness of the offence or be assured that its commission was immediately recent. This sub-section, however, went beyond that. Under the Act as it at present existed, and which one would have thought strong enough, a constable might take into custody without warrant any person who within view of such constable committed any offence under the Act when the name and residence of such person were unknown. The law required that when the offence had not been witnessed by the constable or had not been committed recently a warrant for arrest should be obtained from a Magistrate or a summons should be issued. The present clause, however, proposed to leave the matter absolutely in the hands of the police constable. He was to be the judge the moment he was called upon to act as to whether an offence had been committed, and could arrest if he thought he had "reason to believe" that a person had been guilty of cruelty. That, he submitted, was a very strong order indeed. He did not want to say anything against the Police Force in general, but there were men in it whom it would be dangerous to trust with such powers as were now asked for. The law had never been shaped in this way before, and he objected to the precautions of the past being altered in order to meet peculiar feelings which existed with regard to special crimes and misdemeanours. He did not believe that the House was less desirous of preventing cruelty to children in 1889 than it was to-day. It was anxious to render the law efficient, but was not regardless of the preservation of personal liberty. That liberty should not be placed arbitrarily in the hands of police constables. He begged to move the omission of Sub-section 1 of Clause 7.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section 1.—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 1 stand part of the Clause."

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he could assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that this alteration in the law had not been proposed without considerable thought. He was prepared to accept an Amendment to be moved later on by the Lord Advocate, which, he thought, would remove any objection which might be fairly entertained to the clause. It was true the subject was a great deal discussed in 1889, when for the first time the offences dealt with by this legislation were made offences against the law. If the House of Commons had had the experience and knowledge in 1889 which was available to-day, he had no hesitation in saying the House would have made the existing Act stronger. It was the rarest possible thing for these offences to be committed in view of the constable. It was a domestic offence. The cruelty that took place, the beating and starving of the child, did not and could not, in the nature of the case, take place in view of the constable. The cruelty frequently consisted of a series of acts covering a considerable space of time, and if the person guilty of the offence had any inkling that he was likely to be proceeded against, he would not be present when he was wanted. This was exemplified in the case of one of the most notorious baby-farmers of whom there was any record. In this case eight children died in one year, probably all of them from starvation, but, certainly, four of them died from that cause. The children who died were too young for any graver charge to be made. There was no power of arrest under the principal Act. The case was reported to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and a man was ultimately tried before Mr. Justice Hawkins and sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude, but one of the offenders actually got away in the interval. It was by the merest chance that the person convicted did not also get away. If he had had the slightest inkling of what was taking place he would have done so. In another case, where persons were arrested for cruelty to children by neglecting to provide them with sufficient clothing, it was held by the Magistrates that the offence not having been committed in view of the constable, the accused ought not to have been arrested. It could not be denied that in most of the serious cases the offence could not have been committed in view of the constable. All of them who had had experience of practice in the Courts knew that at times policemen did appear to have overstepped their duty, but looking at the large number of police and the thousands of instances in which their conduct was brought in question both before the Judges and the Magistrates who were always ready, even eager, to take note of any overstepping of duty on the part of the force, he thought the conduct of the police commended itself to the approval of the public.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, the hon. and learned Gentleman had given them two instances where he thought justice had been defeated in the absence of this clause, but in the cases he had referred to could he say that the names and addresses of the offenders were unknown? A summons against them could have been obtained from the nearest Magistrate.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.) said, that no doubt cruelty to children was committed out of the sight of the police. He had had occasion to direct trials in cases of this kind, and in nearly every one of them he had found that the worst cruelties were perpetrated without witnesses, the principal evidence in many cases being the marks on the bodies of the children. There was a class of case in which the remedy provided by this clause should certainly be given, and that was where there was reason to believe that the offenders were likely to abscond.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of the Lord Advocate the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 4, line 11, after "if," insert "he has reasonable ground for believing that such person will abscond, or."

Mr. J. WILSON (Govan) said, he thought it a hardship that children who were taken from their parents and sent to poorhouses should be given up to those parents again after being cleaned and clothed. Yet that occurred over and over again to the great cost of the ratepayers and injury of the children. He would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman in charge of the Bill if he could not see his way to put an end to this hardship.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 12, to leave out from the word "be," to end of sub-section, and insert the words, "proved in such manner as the Court may think sufficient to bind him."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, that the fourth sub-section contained these words—

"and if a person fails to, or has failed to, pay any sum payable by him in pursuance of an Order under that sub-section, he may be dealt with in like manner as if the sum were due from him in pursuance of an Order under the Bastardy Law Amendment Act, 1872."

Surely every Magistrate who had the power to inflict a fine had full power to enforce the penalty. He, therefore, moved the omission of the words he had quoted.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words,

"and if a person fails to, or has failed to, pay any sum payable by him in pursuance of an Order under that sub-section, he may be dealt with in like manner as if the sum were due from him in pursuance of an Order under the Bastardy Law Amendment Act, 1872."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, the Magistrates, rightly or wrongly, thought that the Order to contribute towards the maintenance of children could not be legally enforced.

*Mr. HOPWOOD said, the Magistrates were in error. He failed to see what the Law of Bastardy had to do with the matter, and he objected to this tesselated pavement sort of legislation. This was a law which passed *alio intuitu*, and the proposed enactment recalled the case of the man whom the jury could not find guilty of "murder," but found a verdict for "sheep-stealing," because it carried with it the capital penalty. If the man was not hit one way he would be the other. He considered it was wrong for the Government to deal with the matter in such a way in reference to these orders.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of the LORD ADVOCATE, the following Amendment was agreed to :—Page 5, line 26, after "1872," insert "or in Scotland were a sum decerned for aliment."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.) said, he was glad to hear so general an expression of sympathy from all parts of the House not only with regard to the object, but the methods of the Bill. He hoped there would be no objection offered, however, to this clause being made a little clearer. A certain amount of elasticity had been introduced in other portions, and with regard to enforcing money payments he understood the Solicitor General to be of the same opinion as himself. That matter ought to be made a little clearer than it was at present, and if that were done he thought no objection would be offered.

SIR R. WEBSTER said, if the hon. Member would allow him, he would consider it before the Report stage. He was not aware of any real objection, but he would see if any alteration was required.

Amendment proposed, in line 34, Subsection 6, page 5, to insert the words "brought up in accordance with."—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 agreed to.

Clause 10.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he had not had the advantage of consulting the Secretary of State on this point, but the clause seemed to be objectionable as far as it made any material alteration of the existing Industrial Schools Act, in reference to the substitution in some cases of committal of the child to an independent person for retention in an industrial school. Where such Orders were granted, it would be necessary that some provision should be made afterwards for the children while remaining in the custody of such persons. So far there seemed to be a *primâ facie* objection to the proposed alteration with regard to committing children to the custody of private persons. If this was to be allowed, it should only be upon some provision being made for the child to be looked after while in the custody of a philanthropist or any other independent individual. He formally moved to omit the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the Clause.—(*Mr. George Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

SIR R. WEBSTER hoped that the clause would be allowed to stand, at any rate until the Home Secretary had been consulted. There were clearly cases in which it was desirable to have the power to give the custody to independent persons who were willing and able to take charge of them. He had a number of cases which he might quote of children requiring such provision even among people well connected, where the Industrial Schools Act would not operate. Offences were often committed, unfortunately by persons who, from their position and training, would not be thought capable of them. He hoped that the hon. Member would rest satisfied for the present with having called attention to the matter, leaving it to the Home Secretary to tell the House on the Report stage whether he insisted on the clause.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, boarding-out powers, such as those now proposed, were very valuable. It was often more conducive to the interests of the children in industrial school cases that they should receive the benefits of home and family life; but the boarding-out powers now possessed by Boards of Guardians, and proposed to be further extended in the late Home Secretary's Industrial Schools Bills of 1888-90, were carefully safeguarded by provisions as to Government inspection, and so on. That should be insisted upon when Magisterial orders were made depriving parents of the control of their children.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, that of all people in the world, the greatest fraud was the professional cheap philanthropist who with smug hypocrisy went to Police

Courts and expressed their willingness to take care of children. Such persons had been convicted again and again of cruelty to the unfortunate children committed to their charge until they were old enough to work—if girls, in laundries; or, if boys, in wood-chopping. With the case of the Zierenbergs, which had been journalistically exposed by the hon. Member for Northampton, before their eyes, he appealed to the hon. and learned Member in charge of the Bill to put restrictions and provisions into the clause, before the Report stage was reached, to protect children from "philanthropic" persons who used children as a source of profit, and cruelly ill-treated them.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Formal Amendment.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11.

*MR. HOPWOOD asked how the necessity for altering the provisions as to the issuing of warrants had arisen? The Act of 1889 was very cautiously framed in this as in other respects, and provided that the powers conferred on two Justices might be exercised by one in case of urgency upon the information laid. Was not that power ample? He thought that this was a useless and unnecessary alteration of the law. He moved to leave out Sub-section (1), providing that

> "The power of issuing a warrant under Section 6 of the principal Act may be exercised by any Justice in the same manner as under that section that power may be exercised by a Stipendiary Magistrate or any two Justices of the Peace, and the words 'if upon the information it appears to him to be a case of urgency' are hereby repealed."

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section (1).—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (1) stand part of the Clause."

SIR R. WEBSTER pointed out that the clause was only operative where there was reason to suspect, on information laid, that a child was being ill-treated or neglected. In the towns there was no difficulty in getting two Justices, but in the rural districts, where these offences of cruelty to children were much more common than was supposed, it was not easy always to get two Magistrates. There could be no objection to giving to one Magistrate the authority to order an investigation in necessary cases.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, that nowadays the only question was who was not a Magistrate—they were accessible enough. A good many parts of the Bill were of a suspicious character, extending the powers of the police and the Magistrates far too much, and he, for one, was not prepared to go much further.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, this section made no alteration, for the present law gave power to one Justice to act in cases of emergency, and the object of the section might be defeated if it were necessary to incur delay by getting the concurrence of two Justices. The warrant could only be issued upon a sworn information showing an actual case of urgency.

Question put, and negatived.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12.

SIR R. WEBSTER said, in reference to the Home Secretary's Amendment to leave out this clause, that its object was only to extend to offences against children the 27th, 43rd, and 56th sections of the Offences Against the Person Act, 1861, and the Dangerous Performances Act, 1879. Where offences were committed involving bodily injury to children there seemed no reason why the provisions of those two special Acts should not be applied. He could not see any objection to the procedure clauses.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

*MR. HOPWOOD objected that a very wide and sweeping change of the law was proposed by this clause. It was provided that, where a person was charged with committing an offence in respect of two or more children—

> "The same information, summons, or indictment may charge the offence in respect of all or any of them, but the person charged shall

not be liable to a separate penalty for each child unless upon separate informations."

The law had always insisted upon the single offence being described in a single indictment, with very few and guarded exceptions. It would be unfair to put a man on his trial for two or three cases, each to be tried separately and demanding separate evidence. He should like to know what special reason there was for the alteration of a practice that had existed hitherto to the benefit those concerned? Hitherto a singleness of object had been manifested on the part of the framers of the law, and he did not think it desirable to introduce changes which he did not think would work well. The second section of the clause was equally objectionable. It ran as follows:—

> "The same information, summons, or indictment may also charge the offences of assault, ill-treatment, neglect, abandonment, or exposure, together or separately, but when charged together the person charged shall not be liable to a separate penalty for each."

Here, again, there was confusion thrown around the defendant, because he was presented with more charges than he ought to be called upon to meet. As the clause stood it was a most dangerous one, and effected a most undesirable change in the Criminal Law of the land. With regard to the provision that where the offence was continuous the dates need not be specified, he recognised that as perhaps the most inoffensive portion of the clause. As to the other parts of the clause, he should contend that no case whatever had been made out for them.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** said, he thought the Government would agree with him that the change in the law effected by the clause was a desirable one, notwithstanding the objections made by the hon. and learned Gentleman in the long speech which he had just delivered. The clause was proposed because in many instances Magistrates had decided that where there were several children in a family a separate summons must be taken out in respect of any proceedings entered upon under the Act in regard to each one of them. This provision was the cause of unnecessary expense, and it seemed to him that there was no reason whatever for maintaining the present complicated form of procedure. The hon. and learned Gentleman also took objection to the giving of evidence indicating previous acts of cruelty, but he (Sir R. Webster) suggested that the alteration in the law brought about by this clause was a desirable one both in regard to this matter and the other subjects with which it dealt.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 138; Noes 21.—(Division List, No. 49.)

Clause 14.

**Mr. HOPWOOD** said, this clause was one which altered the whole law of England with regard to the examination of a husband and wife on behalf of or against either. He should think that this clause would be withdrawn.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** said, he thought this was a very desirable amendment of the law, having regard to the great difficulty which at present existed in the way of obtaining evidence where husband and wife were both involved. However, rather than there should be any long Debate upon the matter, he would withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 15.

**Mr. HOPWOOD** said, this clause was a very remarkable one.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** said, he hoped the hon. and learned Member would bear with him while he explained the meaning of the clause. The Bill provided that the evidence of children might be taken without the necessity of administering the oath. It had been the experience of the Judges that evidence given by children who were not sworn was perfectly trustworthy; but there were cases in which the child was so badly injured that he could not be brought into Court at all, and this clause would permit the dying deposition of a child to be taken without the oath.

**Mr. HOPWOOD** said, that as the law stood, an accused person could cross-examine a complainant, which privilege would be sacrificed if such complainant did not give evidence on oath.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** said, the clause would only apply to cases in which the child could not be brought into Court.

**Mr. HOPWOOD** said, the difficulty was that the clause did not provide for the presence of the accused person at the inquiry.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) asked whether this clause would apply only to children whose dying depositions were being taken?

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he would not undertake to say that the clause would apply to these cases only. The fact was that, unless there was this alteration of the law, the dying depositions of children could not be taken at all.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he noticed in the clause the words "injurious to health." These words appeared to him to have a very elastic character.

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he had no objection to amending the clause upon the Report stage.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

On Motion of Mr. J. MORLEY, the following new clause was agreed to:—

(Application to Ireland.)

"In the application of this Act to Ireland the Local Government Board for Ireland shall be substituted for the Local Government Board, the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant shall be substituted for a Secretary of State, and, 'The Indictable Offences (Ireland) Act, 1849,' shall be substituted for 'The Indictable Offences Act, 1848.'"

On Motion of the LORD ADVOCATE, the following new clause was agreed to:—

(Application to Scotland.)

"In the application of this Act to Scotland the Board of Supervision shall be substituted for the Local Government Board; the Secretary for Scotland shall be substituted for a Secretary of State; manslaughter shall mean culpable homicide; and defendant shall include panel, respondent, or person charged."

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 242.]

## MUSIC AND DANCING LICENCES (MIDDLESEX) BILL.—(No. 26.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 18th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) moved to omit from the clause the words—

"Upon such terms and conditions, and subject to such restrictions as they by the respective licences determine."

The hon. Member said this Bill had two objects, the first being to give to the County Council of Middlesex power to grant licences for public performances in music and dancing for a less period than a year. The other object was to give them increased power over the granting of all licences. To the former he had not the slightest objection, because he thought it reasonable that the County Council should have power to grant temporary licences as well as licences in an ordinary way for a year; but as to the latter object, he thought the powers proposed to be conferred upon the Licensing Authority were unnecessary and undesirable. He did not approve of conferring power on County Councils to impose conditions at their will and pleasure upon the annual licences. It might be quite reasonable that they should have power to impose conditions and restrictions of a special character upon temporary licences granted, say, to premises not generally used as a music-hall or a dancing place, and used only on special occasions and for short periods; but when they came to deal with the ordinary annual licences, it would be most unreasonable that they should possess arbitrary and exceptional powers. He maintained that the permanent licence should be granted in the ordinary way, upon the ordinary conditions, and that a man who held such a licence, as long as he observed the ordinary conditions, should enjoy the benefit of it, and that when he came up for its renewal he should not have imposed upon him all sorts of exceptional conditions with reference to himself personally, or as to his place of amusement for a whole year. No doubt it would be said that this provision was taken from the Public Health Act, which was applicable to all England, except the Metropolis and 20 miles round it; and that it was desirable to extend the enactment to the Metropolis. He did not agree to that. His own opinion was that this exceptional power with regard to ordinary licences was overlooked at the time the Public Health Act was passed, and he believed that if attention had been called to this power particularly it would not have been granted. At all events, he did not desire it to be extended to London, and 20 miles round. And there was this to be said: the Public Health Act was only an adoptive Act, and could not be brought compulsorily into operation. If such a power was to be granted to the Middlesex County Council, possibly it would be sought for by the County Council of London, and then they would have a larger question raised, which would be applicable to the great music-halls in London. He contended that this was an arbitrary and unnecessary power, and he proposed that it should be omitted.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words—

"Upon such terms and conditions, and subject to such restrictions as they by the respective licences determine."—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham) said, he hoped the Committee would not agree to this Amendment. The principal object of the Bill was to enable the County Council of Middlesex to grant licences at any time in the year in the same way as was done by Justices outside the 20-mile radius. For that purpose the Bill gave the County Council power to grant these licences upon the very same terms and conditions as Justices exercised outside the radius. The words were taken from the Public Health Act of 1890, and the whole of the Bill was founded exactly upon that measure. The only difference was that the Act of 1890 was adoptive, and otherwise they simply proposed to transfer the power of the Justices to the County Council of Middlesex.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had charge of the Bill of 1890, and he desired to say that the clause now before the Committee had been very carefully considered. As a fact, the provisions of the clause had been extensively adopted, and he thought this was one of those cases where there ought to be a uniform law throughout the whole country. In many respects London was exactly the same as our large towns. What was good for them was good for London, and what was bad for the large towns was also bad for London. He hoped the whole clause would be adopted.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds.) said, he supported the Second Reading of the Bill on behalf of the Government, and he saw no reason at this time for withdrawing such support.

Question put, and agreed to.

*Mr. T. H. BOLTON said, he wished to move that Sub-section 7 be omitted. This sub-section provided that any house or place licensed under the Act should not be opened for any of the said purposes except on the days and between the hours stated in the licence. He thought this enactment unnecessary, as it was already the law, and he moved its omission.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section 7.—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section 7 stand part of the Clause."

Mr. HOWARD said, his answer to the Amendment was the same as that he had before given. He hoped that the provision would be retained.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; Bill read the third time, and passed.

## PUBLIC BUILDINGS (LONDON) BILL.
(No. 79.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 2nd May.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 30, after the word "served," to insert the words—

"The Order shall not require to be confirmed by Act of Parliament."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said, great injustice might be done by giving such wide and varied powers to Local Authorities without requiring them to obtain the sanction of Parliament. He therefore hoped the Committee would refuse to accept the Amendment.

*Colonel **HUGHES** (Woolwich) said, he accepted the Amendment, which extended to the London Vestries the power which by the Local Government Act of last Session was given to Parish Councils throughout the country.

The Marquess of **CARMARTHEN** (Lambeth, Brixton) said, he thought they were entitled to know the view of the Government with regard to this proposal to deprive the ratepayers of a valuable safeguard against the extravagance of Local Bodies.

The **SECRETARY** to the **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Sir W. Foster, Derby, Ilkeston) said, the Government saw no reason why London should not possess the power given to Parish Councils to take land for similar purposes to those contemplated by the Bill.

Mr. **BANBURY**: Parish Councils are limited in their power of rating.

Sir W. **FOSTER** said, the action of the Local Authority would still be subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, and therefore he thought the ratepayers would be sufficiently protected.

Mr. **WHITMORE** (Chelsea) said, he should be sorry to see the Local Authorities in London possessed of less direct power than Parish Councils. He believed the Amendment would, by increasing the responsibility of the Local Authorities in London, induce the ratepayers to take a greater interest in local affairs.

Mr. **BANBURY** said, he thought the hon. Gentleman was mistaken as to the effect of the Amendment. It seemed to him it was rather hard upon the ratepayers of London to compel them to place their hands in their pockets in this way. After the division of opinion which had taken place on that side of the House he would not press his opposition to the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to,

On Motion of Mr. Byles, the following Amendment was agreed to:—To leave out Sub-section 6.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Sir R. **WEBSTER** moved the following clause:—

(Exempting Lincoln's Inn.)

"Nothing in this Act contained shall extend to the extra-parochial place in Lincoln's Inn."

Mr. T. H. **BOLTON** did not know why the Temple and Gray's Inn should not be included.

Mr. **HOPWOOD** said, he intended to move the words—

"Shall extend to the extra-parochial places of the Inner and Middle Temple and Gray's Inn"

in addition to Lincoln's Inn.

*Colonel **HUGHES** said, he was sure no Vestry in London had any intention of going outside its own district in order to build premises in these Inns.

Amendments agreed to to the proposed new clause, to leave out the word "place," in order to insert "places"; and to add after "Lincoln's Inn" "the Inner Temple, the Middle Temple, and Gray's Inn."

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 243.]

## SHOP HOURS ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 189.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 1st May.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

Mr. **TOMLINSON** (Preston) said, he would move to omit the condition requiring that the work must terminate not later than 9 o'clock. He did not think that in general there was so much reason to complain of the hours worked in shops as many people seemed to suppose. There might be some few places where the hours were too heavy. But to say that in every case, whatever the custom of the place might be, whatever might be the habits of the people, shops must close at 9 o'clock, would be, in his opinion, to go much further than they ought. If the hours were to be limited to 60 in a week, a shop that was kept open later than 9 o'clock on one evening would have to close earlier on another day, and thus no hardship would be inflicted.

MR. PROVAND said, he should be willing to accept the Amendment, provided that no other changes were made in the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "each day's work to terminate not later than 9 p.m."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN said, that even if the hon. Member for Preston entered into an agreement with the hon. Member in charge of the Bill——

MR. TOMLINSON: I have entered into no agreement. I have simply moved an Amendment, which has been accepted.

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN said, that even with the Amendment the clause would in no way satisfy him. It would be ridiculous to fix a hard-and-fast line to the hours during which young people could be employed in shops. In his own constituency a rigid rule would work with great hardship. In some districts it was only early in the morning and late in the evening that shopping was done. Thus, although the shops were kept open, it was only for five or six hours that the people employed in them had any real work to do. This was not a Bill they should force on people if they did not want it. There was no necessity for it, for shop assistants could protect themselves against excessive labour by combination.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, the noble Lord stated that the people to whom the Bill would apply would be able to protect themselves by means of combination. If the noble Lord knew anything about the condition of the shop assistants he would know that even in the case of adults, to whom the Bill did not apply, they were incapable of protecting themselves by voluntary effort. That was the experience in all parts of the country. Voluntary effort had signally failed to bring shop assistants to a maximum working day. Surely in the case of young persons the hours laid down in the Bill were sufficiently long. In his view, there was no reasonable ground of objection to the clause as amended at the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for Preston.

MR. KEARLEY said that, speaking from experience, he could assure the Committee that young people were unable to protect themselves. He was in favour of limiting the hours. The noble Lord the Member for Brixton had said that the Bill would inflict hardship, but he had failed to say on whom it would inflict hardship.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he did not think the Bill had been as fully considered as it should be in the House or in the country. It raised a question of very great importance to the smaller class of retail tradespeople—a class which he contended was particularly deserving of sympathy, struggling as they were against the greatest difficulties at the present time. He did not know a class of people who were deserving of greater consideration than the small shopkeepers and employers. No doubt in large establishments where numerous hands were employed the clause might not do any harm, but to the small tradesmen with only two or three hands, who carried on their businesses with the assistance of their families, such a clause would be found a great hardship. It was impossible for many of the working classes to do their shopping before a late hour. This was the case in the district he represented, where there was one of those large informal markets.

*MR. PROVAND: I rise to Order, Sir. The Amendment seeks to leave out those words, and that Amendment has been accepted. The hon. Member is discussing what the effect would be if those words were not taken out of the clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is quite within his right in discussing the Amendment.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, the matter was one of very considerable importance to his constituents. In North St. Pancras there was a very large market, the business of which was carried on after the time mentioned in the clause, and if an arbitrary rule were established their business would be upset and they would practically be unable to serve their customers. It might suit the purpose of the hon. Gentleman to strike out this portion of the clause for the purpose of getting the Bill through Committee to-day, but he (Mr. Bolton) did not think the Bill ought to get through Committee to-day. He thought that if a Bill of this kind was to be passed it should contain practicable and workable clauses——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not now discussing the Amendment.

MR. T. H. BOLTON: Then I will defer what I have to say until you put the clause.

Question put, and negatived.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked if there was any definition of "employment" in the Bill?

MR. PROVAND said, there was a definition in the Act of 1892.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, if the Bill was so much required he could not understand why a distinction should be drawn between members of a shopkeeper's family and other persons who might be employed by him. It seemed to him that if there was to be further legislation to protect those who worked in shops, it was desirable that it should apply equally to the children of the shopkeeper as to those who were not his children. The clause also appeared to be too wide. "In or about or in connection with the work of the shop" might include taking goods home, and so interfere with what was really healthy exercise. He could understand that in a crowded shop where there was a great deal of gas——[*Ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members laughed at the word "gas," but there was a great deal of gas about all this legislation. It was very pretentious legislation—legislation which professed to do a great deal and which would practically do very little for those whom it professed to benefit. An hon. Gentleman had made this Bill the opportunity of expressing his effusive sympathy with the class of shop assistants, although he must know that all Members of the House sympathised with that class.

Mr. KEARLEY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the CHAIRMAN withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON went on to suggest that the Committee stage of the Bill should be postponed, in order that those who did not agree with the clause in its present shape, but were not opposed to its principle, might endeavour to discuss with the promoters some practicable clause which would carry out effectually the desire which everybody felt to protect shop assistants. He moved to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

*MR. PROVAND hoped the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion. It had been found, since Inspectors were appointed under the Act of 1892, that a large number of boys and girls were employed for between 75 and 100 hours a week. The object of the Bill was merely to limit the hours during which the boys and girls might be employed. He was sure that no hon. Member would say that boys and girls could defend themselves in a matter of this kind.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked what view the Government took as to the framing of the Bill? Did they think that the measure in its present form was a practical and workable measure?

Mr. PROVAND rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the CHAIRMAN withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

MR. TOMLINSON asked whether the Government had examined the drafting of the Bill in connection with other Acts with which it was incorporated?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.): Yes, Sir; we have considered the Bill carefully, and we supported the Second Reading.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was not asking about the Second Reading, but whether the Government thought the

Bill required any amendment in Committee?

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Motion to report Progress lapsed, and the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

### LAND ACTS (IRELAND).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on Land Acts (Ireland) do consist of Seventeen Members, and that Mr. Solicitor General be added to the Committee."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.): I beg to ask is it the case that Lord Justice Fitzgibbon has applied on his own motion to be heard before this Committee?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: No, Sir; it is by my wish that Lord Justice Fitzgibbon has consented to come and give evidence before the Committee.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): With reference to Lord Justice Fitzgibbon's coming before the Committee, I should like to ask on what point he is coming to be examined upon?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: This is only a Motion as to the addition of a Member to the Committee, and I do not think that such a question can be raised upon it, except as to the name of the substitute Member.

Motion agreed to.

### CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) (BRIDGWATER, &c., CANALS) BILL.—(No. 198.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### COMMONS REGULATION PROVISIONAL ORDER (LUTON) BILL.—(No. 223.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.—(No. 195.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.—(No. 220.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.—(No. 222.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print, and circulate with the Votes, the Minutes of their Proceedings, and any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. A. O'Connor.*)

### MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS (1887 AND 1891) AMENDMENT (CUTLERY) BILL. (No. 98.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS BILL. (No. 57.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Members and Officers of the Local Government Board appointed in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland, and for other purposes.—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

### PAROCHIAL ELECTORS (REGISTRATION ACCELERATION) [COST OF REVISING BARRISTERS].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the cost of any additional number of Revising Barristers who may be required in the present year for the purpose of accelerating the Registration of Parochial Electors in England and Wales.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday, 24th May 1894.*

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### TRURO AND NEWQUAY JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

### CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now considered."

**Mr. BOLITHO** (Cornwall, St. Ives), in moving the rejection of the Bill, said, that he had information to show that all the Local Authorities in Cornwall were, opposed to the Bill, and he was willing, therefore, to give effect to the wishes of his constituents. He desired it to be understood that while he was opposing the Bill he had no intention of doing anything that would prevent more facilities being given for passenger and merchandise traffic. His point, however, was that if this Bill passed into law every one of the objects which he desired to sustain would be frustrated. The wishes of the whole county were against this Bill, and he thought that the expression of local opinion of so decided a character ought not to be overlooked. Two Bills were presented to the Committee upstairs. The North Cornwall Railway Bill temporarily received its quietus from the hands of the Committee, while the Truro and Newquay Bill passed the Committee. He might inform the House that when the décision of the Committee was made known there was extreme consternation and dismay throughout the County of Cornwall. Upon the face of the Bill there was no very ambitious scheme contemplated, but he assured the House that the measure as it stood would work most serious injury to the county, through which the line passed. So far as he was able to ascertain, there was nobody at all in favour of the Bill. He had the statement of the promoters of the Bill in his hand, and he must say that he considered that the case which they made out was very weak. The Great Western Railway Company was opposed to this Bill up to almost the last day, but towards the end of the proceedings that Company suddenly became supporters of the measure, and while he had no wish to say anything that might appear to be harsh of the Great Western Company, he was bound to call the attention of the House to the extraordinary action which they had taken in regard to this particular matter. He was perfectly ready to admit that within the last two years or so that Company had done a very great deal in the way of opening up communication between London and Cornwall, but he must say that with regard to this particular matter the Company had acted in a manner which was neither generous nor justifiable. In the interests of the agriculturists, the market gardeners, and the growers of vegetables in Cornwall he should ask the House to reject this Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Bolitho.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

**Mr. J. C. WILLIAMS** (Truro) said, he hoped the House would agree to the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. The people who were affected by the Bill had already suffered severely enough because of the monopoly of the Great Western Railway. Hon. Members of the House looking at a map of the County of Devon might be disposed to think that with the sea on both sides she might be practically independent of railways. That, however, was not the case. The main produce of that extreme western point of the country was of a perishable nature; it was impossible to convey it by sea, and it had all of it to be sent to London and the other great towns by rail. All the Public Bodies in the county had recognised the fact that the Bill would very seriously militate against the local interest. He would indeed make himself responsible for the statement that every Public Body in the county was opposed to the measure, and he should think that every Member of Parliament who knew the merits of the case would, irrespective of the Party to which he belonged, vote in favour of his hon. Friend's Motion for rejection.

*SIR J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, he thought the House ought to pay attention to the fact that all the Corporate and Elected Bodies of Cornwall had petitioned against this Bill; and whilst he believed that the measure was inimical to the true interests of Cornwall, he was of opinion that the promoters of the North Cornwall Railway were not wise in trying to obtain running powers over the Great Western lines. Access to Penzance, Falmouth, and other places would be better obtained by what were generally termed facility clauses, rather than by running powers. Under all the circumstances of the case, he did not see that the House could do any less than reject the measure. Representations were made against the Bill of so strong a character that it appeared to him that the House had no alternative but to throw out the scheme. No doubt an important precedent was being created by the rejection of the Bill at this stage, but he thought the establishment of a precedent was warranted by the fact that in this case the passage of the Bill was opposed to the best interests of the county which it affected.

*SIR R. PAGET (Somerset, Wells) said, that the issue raised by the Motion before the House was not so limited as at first sight might appear to be the case. It was, in fact, a Motion of a very unusual description, but the circumstances of the case were themselves very simple. The Committee of which he had the honour to be Chairman had before them two rival schemes. They approved of the one and rejected the other. In the ordinary course of things, it would be for the opponents of the scheme which the Committee sanctioned to carry their opposition to the other House, where in the ordinary course the Bill would be fully considered. This was the usual course when these Railway Bills were concerned. Sometimes a Bill was initiated in the one House, and sometimes in the other. And it was quite competent for the opponents, if unsuccessful in the House where the Bill was first dealt with, to go to the other House. It would be remembered that the Manchester Ship Canal Bill was initiated in one House, and thrown out in the other. In the following Session it was begun in the House of Lords and thrown out in the Commons. Only after three years did it succeed in passing both Houses. To attempt to deal with a Bill on the present Motion proposed was really an attempt to avoid the usual course of procedure. ["No!"] It was an attempt to constitute that House a sort of Court of Appeal. And with all respect, he wished strongly to say that that House had not the materials before them on which they could come to a decision, or even give a fair hearing to the case. There were plenty of cases on record wherein the House had re-committed Bills to the Committee which had sat upon them, but that was always because, in the interval between the decision of the Committee and the Bills coming before the House a compromise had been effected between the parties, and the opposition had been withdrawn, so that the conditions and circumstances were completely altered. He must express his regret that in this case a compromise had not been effected. He would not attempt to go into the merits of the case. It would take too long. The issue, he repeated, was one which in his judgment should have been a subject of arrangement and compromise. But his point was that, if there were cases on record such as he had stated, there was no case on record in which a Bill having been before a Private Bill Committee, and having been considered by the Committee for the prolonged period of a week—evidence being taken at length and counsel fully heard—the House had reversed the decision of the Committee. In view of this absence of precedent and the established practice of the House, he submitted that to do what was now asked would be a most retrograde act. They knew that there was a time—in the old days—when, if objection was taken to the proceedings of a Private Bill Committee, the opponents could appeal to the House for a Court of Appeal, and then a Committee was appointed in a most laborious manner—seven Members being selected by ballot from the knights of the shires, and they had to sit day after day—to review the decision which was called in question. They all knew, also, that it was not so long ago since witnesses were heard at the Bar of the House. But these were practices which the House in its wisdom had departed from, and now there was an attempt by a side wind——[MR. CONYBEARE: Oh, no!] Well, he would not say a side wind if the expression was objected to; but there was an attempt to return in some sense to the old state of things—an attempt by a most unusual procedure to upset the decision of the Committee instead of letting the Bill go forward to the other House, and carrying on the opposition there. What was the ground on which they were asked to take this course? He had listened to the arguments used by the hon. Member for St. Ives; but he had failed to hear anything that was not before the Committee which had the advantage of hearing the evidence the opponents chose to tender. There was nothing that fell from the hon. Member that was not before the Committee and fully considered by them. He readily admitted that there had developed a very strong force of local objection, and he must express his regret that the decision of the Committee was one to which such strong local objection had been taken. But he would point out that the stronger the local objection the stronger would be the case which would be made out if the Bill proceeded to the proper tribunal, the House of Lords. He did not pretend that this Committee, any more than any other Committee, was infallible; but there was only one proper course for the House to take, and that was to support the Committee, and let this Bill take its chance before a Committee of the other House. As he had said, he would not go into the merits of the Bill; but he might be allowed to say that the Committee were unanimous in their decision. Speaking from his experience as a Chairman on various Committees, he must say that he never saw a Committee more intent on their work or more anxious to do their duty. Proceedings in Private Bill Committee were essentially of a judicial character. The whole of the *modus operandi* was judicial. They had counsel addressing them, witnesses examined and cross-examined, and after a full and careful consideration the Committee came to their decision as to what, on a balance of conflicting interests, was best for the public advantage. He ventured to say that it would be difficult to get Members of that House to devote themselves with the whole of their energies to this work, occupying days, and sometimes weeks, if, after giving their complete attention in a judicial manner to the matter before them, they were to find that their work was liable to be upset on an *ex parte* statement by the House of Commons which had not the evidence before it. He wished to cite an authority in this matter, that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, it would be remembered, once practised with success at the Parliamentary Bar. The right hon. Gentleman in 1872 told the House of Commons that over and over again he had known decisions of the House of Commons on Private Bills reversed in the House of Lords, but never recollected any case in which that reversal was not right. The right hon. Gentleman added that this was natural, because upon the second hearing the evidence might be strengthened, mistakes corrected, and the whole case better understood. He (Sir R. Paget) desired that the present Bill should go forward to the place where the evidence might be strengthened, mistakes corrected, and the whole case better understood. The existing system had grown up gradually. By degrees they had established a method under which Committees were the bodies to which they entrusted this work. They ought not to disturb that system without very good cause. There was a further consideration which he had yet to urge, and it was the danger they ran of introducing the practice of log-rolling, of lobbying, of canvassing for votes—a practice from which their Committees were happily free. The Committees were chosen because they were men with no personal local or political interests to serve; but if they allowed these matters to be considered by the whole House the door would be opened to log-rolling, lobbying, and canvassing—a class of evil from which Heaven preserve them! His own years of Parliamentary life must soon come to an end, but he should be very sorry to find at the close of his career that the action of the House had been such as to introduce an evil from which they had hitherto escaped, and by the rejection of this Bill had set up a very bad precedent.

MR. OWEN (Cornwall, Launceston) said, he had to support the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. The people of Cornwall were, of course, grateful to the Great Western Railway for what they had done in opening out the south coast, but, unfortunately, the north coast had been almost entirely without railway service up to the present time. The London and South Western Railway Company had opened a branch as far as Launceston, and a local Company had been formed with an agreement with the London and South Western Railway Company to open out the north coast of Cornwall in a way for which they had been waiting this 40 years. The scheme was in process, but if this small Bill was passed it would shut out Cornwall from having two lines, as was desired. His own constituents in Nort East Cornwall naturally wanted an easy mode of access to Truro and to the west. This they would get by the extension of the North Cornwall Railway, and what they asked was that the House would throw out this small Bill, which was thoroughly inadequate to serve the interests of this part of the country, and instead leave the whole question open till next year, when it could be fully considered, and the schemes put forward by the two rival Railway Companies properly gone into. The hon. Baronet the Member for Wells had suggested that this opposition should have been brought before the Committee. But it was quite unexpected that the Committee would throw out the North Cornwall Railway Bill. Otherwise stronger means would have been taken. They had now on the one hand the decision of the Committee, and on the other the unanimous voice of Cornwall without respect to Party. He believed that all the seven Representatives from Cornwall were there that day prepared to vote for the throwing out of this Bill, and he asked the House to throw it out on the ground that the people might reasonably be assumed to know what was best for themselves. The hon. Baronet said that all the facts were not before the House. But all the facts were before the county. From one end of the county to the other the people understood this question, and were almost unanimous in desiring that there should be two large railway systems to open out the county instead of their being confined to one.

*Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said that, as a Member of the Railway Rates Committee, he desired to say a few words and to show some general grounds for supporting the Motion for the rejection of the Bill. They all had a great respect for the hon. Baronet personally, and also for him in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee, and when the hon. Baronet said that this was an unusual proceeding they must agree with him. But the circumstances were themselves unusual, so much so as to justify exceptional action. This Bill was promoted by the Great Western Railway Company, and its effect, if it were passed, would be to strengthen the monopoly of that Company, and it would place the local and non-competitive traffic—which was a most important part of the traffic—more completely in the hands of a Company which had in the past dealt with such traffic in a manner which could not be defended, and which did not justify any increase of its powers. They had many complaints before the Railway Rates Committee against railways, but the chief offender was the Great Western. In their Report the Committee took the Great Western as a typical instance of what a great Railway Company was capable of doing in the case of local and non-competitive traffic. Parliament reduced the maximum rates, and the Great Western alleged that this would bring about a loss of £80,000 to the Company. What did they do? They immediately raised the rates universally to the maximum, and, instead of merely recouping themselves to the amount of £80,000, they thus actually charged an additional £130,000, and made a profit of £50,000 out of the action of Parliament, which was intended to benefit the traders. Their principle of action was admitted by them to be that they must be entitled to make the traffic pay all it would bear. They did not take into account that the ultimate bearing point might be the breaking point. What was the class of traffic with which the Company thus dealt? In the Report of the Committee they would see that the manager stated that the Company had not been able to raise the rates for traffic where there was competition with other lines or with canals, and that the increased charges had fallen wholly on the non-competitive traffic—that was, the local traffic, and largely, therefore, the agricultural traffic, with which the hon. Baronet the Member for Wells was himself in sympathy, and which was suffering from such severe depression. The action of the Company was, as a matter of fact, directed against those who could not help themselves. They could not be surprised that the Municipalities, which could give voice to local interests, and the whole of the Members for Cornwall were resolutely opposed to the Bill. The action of the Company in the past had been such that it was the last that should be entrusted with any increase of powers of this description. The House should be jealous of enlarging a monopoly which had been adverse to the interests of this district, and from his knowledge of what took place on the Railway Rates Committee he should most heartily, in the general and public interests, support the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that the Members for Cornwall agreed that the course which they were adopting was wholly unusual, but he thought that a few facts which he was able to place before the House would further emphasise the justice of their action. The hon. Baronet said that they had no business to come before the House and try to upset the verdict of the Committee, but he claimed that this House could not be deprived of its authority, right, and duty to consider Bills which had passed Committees. He might remind them of the course that was taken on the Employers' Liability Bill, which was considered last Session by a Grand Committee of the House. The Bill was considered in its main principles by the House, and the hon. Baronet's own Party was the most stringent advocate for reconsidering the principles of the measure. In connection with the present Bill they were there not to consider details, which were properly the work of a Committee. They did not ask the House to re-try this question, and go into the evidence, but they did say that the House should consider the principles which were at stake. The hon. Baronet referred to precedents. But principles were at stake more important than mere precedents. They asked the House to consider those principles and not to reject the unanimous prayer of the whole of the community whose interests were involved. But there was another reason why he demurred to the hon. Baronet's argument. They did not desire to rely upon the action of the House of Lords—["Hear, hear!"]—they preferred to deal with the elected Representatives of the people. If they could not get justice from this House they might have to resort to the House of Lords. But speaking for a constituency which were not prone to recognise the legislative fitness of the House of Lords, he said that he preferred to appeal to the House of Commons. The hon. Baronet stated forcibly and truly that the Committees on Private Bills were mainly judicial in their character, and he pointed out what was equally true in theory, that these Committees were carefully selected, and that the Members were not supposed to have any interest in the matters at stake. He (Mr. Conybeare) had himself been pointedly refused by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Oxford University to be a Member of the Committee because, though he had no direct personal interest in the matter at issue, and his constituency was not affected by the scheme, he represented a portion of the county which was connected with the fortunes of the Bill. But, notwithstanding what was said on this subject, he held that they should look carefully into the question whether Members of the Committee were or were not interested in railways affected. If he were challenged on this point, he would show that in some of these cases the rule was not rigidly adhered to, as he thought that it should be. With regard to the subject of precedents, the hon. Baronet quoted from an ancient speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As to this, it only went to show that the rejection of Private Bills which had taken place occasionally in the Upper House had always been a rejection which was justified. He held that *à fortiori* the rejection of a Bill by the House of Commons would be of a similar character. The hon. Baronet had gone on to say that nothing had fallen from the Members for Cornwall to-day which was not carefully considered by the Committee. Well, as to this, there were 36 witnesses heard. He would ask how many of them were in favour of the Bill—he meant the North Cornwall Bill—and how many in favour of the Bill which they asked the House that day to reject? There were not six witnesses in favour of the Bill last named. The whole weight of the evidence was, in reality, in favour of the North Cornwall Bill and against the Junction Railway. The hon. Baronet relied on precedent, but he had not uttered a single word in defence of his decision—it was practically his decision—when he declared that the Preamble of the North Cornwall Bill was not proven.

*SIR R. PAGET: The decision was the unanimous decision of the Committee, and by no means the decision of the Chairman.

MR. CONYBEARE said, that he did not mean to suggest that the Committee were not unanimous, but, of course, the Chairman of these Committees always exercised superior weight, and they had no reason whatever, except the bare appeal to precedent—which did not weigh one jot with him—why the Committee should have declared that the Preamble was not proved. He wanted to know why it was declared that the Preamble of the North Cornwall Bill was not proved? The part of the Preamble which was rejected was this clause—because all the other clauses were really not vital—which was the vital clause:—

> "And whereas it will be for public and local advantage that the Company should be authorised so make and maintain the new railways and works from Padstow to Truro and the junction in or near Truro with the Falmouth branch line and the West Cornwall line of the Great Western Railway Company and to exercise and enjoy the running powers by this Act authorised."

He said that was the only portion of the Preamble which the hon. Baronet could hold was not proved, but he wanted to know on what grounds the hon. Gentleman so held? The whole weight of evidence went to show that the whole public opinion of Cornwall was in favour of the Bill. If there was any doubt as to whether the North Cornwall line was for the benefit of the people of Cornwall it should be dissipated by the knowledge of the attitude of the people in the matter. They were not children in Cornwall; they were men of sense, and they did not want four Members of that House to dictate to them what was best in their own interests. They were perfectly competent to decide what they wanted, and they intended to decide it. There were 11 Municipalities which had petitioned in favour of the North Cornwall Bill, also eight Local Boards of Health, 14 Boards of Guardians, 30 District School Boards, seven District Burial Boards, most of the Justices of the Peace, Chambers of Commerce, Commercial Companies, and Mercantile Associations of all the principal towns, and other authorities. What were they told in answer to that? There was the statement which had been circulated in favour of the Bill, the rejection of which had been moved by his hon. Friend—

> "It is submitted that it would be unusual, if not without precedent, for the House to reject a Bill so carefully considered by a Select Committee, and in favour of which so much evidence was forthcoming."

As to the point about the Bill having been carefully considered, he was not going to reflect upon the conduct of the Committee, but he did say it was not accurate to state that it was so carefully considered when they had the fact that the Committee committed a gross blunder by rejecting the whole Bill and having to re-commit it in respect of unopposed portions of the Bill, which they totally overlooked. In connection with the Junction Bill, the rejection of which was now asked for, there was a long argument as to the breach of the Standing Orders, but that was condoned by the hon. Baronet, and, in addition, the necessary legal notices were not served upon many of the landowners, and the notices could not be accepted as legal in consequence of this breach of the Standing Orders; therefore, he thought they need not trouble themselves much about the supposed unusual care with which this question was considered. He should like the House to understand who the promoters of these two rival Bills were. The promoters of the North Cornwall Bill were the most respected, influential men in the country. They (the Directors) were Mr. James Tremayne, Earl Wharncliffe, Mr. Lewis Charles Foster, Lord Halsbury, Sir Lewis W. Molesworth, Sir W. Onslow, Sir Charles G. Prideaux Brune, Mr. Charles Bambridge Rendle, Mr. Michael Williams, and Mr. Arthur Mills—a stronger body of men could not be found. He admitted this frankly, though he did not suppose that there was a single one of them who were not politically opposed to him, but they represented the best interests of the county. Who had they got as promoters of the other Bill—which was really a one-horse tramway arrangement of six miles? They had a gentleman called Mr. Read, who might be known in the county as the liquidator of the Cornwall Minerals Line, but in no other capacity. He did not think that Mr. Read possessed an acre of land in the whole county, and the other promoter was a Mr. Loden, who was equally unknown. He said, on the one hand, they had two absolutely unknown men whose names would not get a farthing of capital in the county; and they were told that these men, to use an Americanism, were to boss the county in the matter of this railway question against those weighty names representing both Houses of Parliament and representing the best classes and best interests in Cornwall. He said these facts ought to be known to hon. Members who desired to give an upright vote on a question like this. He had it on the authority of the Secretary to the agent for the Duchy of Cornwall that the passing of the Bill now before the House would put the county back 50 years. They did not want to be put back 50 years. It was desired by competition to bring the county into cheaper and more speedy communication not only with London, but the manufacturing districts in the Midlands and the North; and if the Great Western Company's Bill were passed, the House would be bolstering up that Company's monopoly. He had intended to have given one or two facts with respect to railway rates, but the speech of the hon. Member for Islington (Sir A. Rollit), to whom they were deeply grateful, had made this unnecessary. There were only one or two further points which he wished to lay before the House, connected with the general policy of the Great Western Railway. When the West Cornwall Railway Bill was passed in 1846, running powers over the line were reserved to any railway which might come into the county hereafter. Subsequently to this, in an Omnibus Bill, the Great Western Railway Company surreptitiously repealed these running powers, and thus a set-fight would be necessary before such powers could be obtained again. This only showed the general policy adopted in this case. There was a secret agreement between the South Western and the Great Western Railway Companies; but he contended that the County of Cornwall was not made for the benefit of either of these railways, but the railways for the benefit of the people of Cornwall. It would be an injustice to the people of the whole county if their interests should be postponed to any arrangement by which two great Railway Companies had chosen to farm out a county and say to the people, "You must take this or that, and we will not allow anybody else to trespass upon the sphere of action reserved to us." This little railway the House was asked to reject was pressed upon the Great Western time and again during the last few years, but they never thought it necessary to construct it; but now, when they saw a line proposed which was for the benefit of the whole county, they stirred themselves up and said this extended scheme was not necessary, and the money would never be obtained for it. Well, the requisite money for any immediate extension was already provided. The county had already provided the £600,000 capital to carry on the works so far, and it was not likely to be behind in finding the other £200,000. This was the policy which the Great Western had pursued in every other case. It was not right that the House should do anything to assist the monopolising policy of the Great Western or any other railway. What was demanded in the county was that there should be free and open competition in these matters. It was incomprehensible to him that the Committee upstairs should have rejected the Preamble of the North Cornwall Railway Bill which declared it would be for the advantage of the county that that railway should be constructed, and it would be still more incomprehensible to him if the House should support that decision.

*MR. JOHNSON-FERGUSON (Leicester, Loughborough) said, that had he not been a Member of the Committee which considered these two Bills, he should not have ventured to trespass upon the time of the House on an occasion like this. What they had to decide was whether the decision of that Committee which had these Bills before them for six days, examined numerous witnesses, and had given the matter the most continuous and exhaustive examination, was to be supported and accepted by this House, or whether that decision was to be set on one side and the Bill they passed rejected; or, in other words, the way opened for the other Bill, which, after the most careful examination, they regarded as unsuitable to be passed. Let him explain what the real position of the question was. It was desirable that there should be a railway between Newquay and Truro, a distance of 13 miles. Already a line existed for six miles belonging to the Cornwall Minerals Railway, leased to the Great Western Railway, and the Company, the Bill of which they passed, proposed to construct a line seven miles in length, joining that short section with Truro, improving that short section and making it a working passenger line between Newquay and Truro, at an expense of under £80,000. The other Company—the North Cornwall—came forward with a proposal to construct a line from Padstow through Newquay to Truro, a distance of 25 miles, at the estimated cost of £450,000. They had already for 12 years had an Act enabling them to construct a line from Halswell to Padstow. Two-thirds of that line was constructed, a portion of it was in course of construction, and the last part, from Wadebridge to Padstow, was not as yet attempted. What was the position of the capital of that Company? Less than one-half of that capital had been subscribed by the public, and the rest of the money, as far as the line had gone, had been provided month by month by the Consolidated Bank of Cornwall. It was perfectly evident to the Committee there was not the slightest probability of the North Cornwall Railway Company within any reasonable time being able to raise the capital necessary to complete their own line, and still less to complete the 25 miles of additional line which they asked for from Padstow to Truro. The Committee, therefore, regarded it as in the interests of the districts concerned that the short line from Newquay to Truro should be constructed, and he appealed to the House to support that decision of the Committee and read this Bill a third time.

Mr. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid, St. Austell) (LORD OF THE TREASURY), desired to say a word or two, as this was a question which affected his own constituency in particular, and he admitted quite freely that they were asking the House of Commons to take a strong step when they asked them to reverse a finding of a Committee of this House, and he was quite sure nobody who knew him would accuse him of want of respect to the hon. Baronet the Chairman of that Committee or his colleagues. He was not making any reflection on those Members or on the manner which the inquiry was conducted, but he said they could make out in Cornwall an unanswerable case to show the House of Commons why they should reject the finding of the Committee upstairs. The County of Cornwall had shown by the Petitions sent to this House from every Electoral Authority in the county, from the County Council to every Burial Board, that the feeling was unanimous against this Bill. It was quite true, it might be, that the case for Cornwall ought to have been better presented before the Committee, but he was prepared to show that a large part of the local feeling had arisen since the decision of the Committee. He said, in his judgment that was caused by the fact that nobody in Cornwall, so far as he knew, ever dreamed that that Committee would pass this particular Bill and reject the other larger scheme proposed to them. It was only when the County of Cornwall awoke to the danger in which it lay through this Bill being passed that the people unanimously asked the House to deliver them from the gigantic monopoly and reject this Bill on the Third Reading. The Chairman of the Committee just now regretted that a compromise had not been arrived at on this question. He thought the hon. Baronet was right in that regret. It was obviously the intention of the Great Western Railway Company not to compromise on this question, but to continue their monopoly in Cornwall, and to prevent any other line as long as they could from making a through line from London down to Cornwall. He said, therefore, this House had every reason to interfere in this matter. The House was not being asked to support a monopoly, but to defeat one. Everyone in Cornwall desired that the House should not force down the throats of the people a railway which they did not want, and which all their elected bodies had petitioned against. He asked the House to vote for the rejection of the Bill on the broad ground that when there was such local unanimity the House of Commons should not disregard it.

Mr. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, W.), as a Member of the Committee which considered these two Bills, said, that in reference to the observations of the hon. Member for Camborne, he had to say that the hon. Baronet who was the Chairman of that Committee (Sir R. Paget) did not rely merely on precedent, but he thought the time of the House was too precious to go into the questions which occupied the Committee six or seven days. On the Committee they had no doubt that opinion in Cornwall was in favour of the North Cornwall Bill; but it was evident that what was hoped was that they would bring down the rates by having two railways—a result which could only be arrived at by granting running powers which it was impossible to grant. The Members of the Committee approached this question with open minds. For his part, although he was in favour of the North Cornwall Railway, he was, from the facts brought before them, converted to the other way of thinking during the progress of the Committee, and the decision they arrived at was the only one they could arrive at, and he asked the House to uphold it.

Mr. Havelock Wilson rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but Mr. Speaker withheld his assent, as it appeared to him that the House was prepared to come to an immediate decision.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 69; Noes 290.—(Division List, No. 50.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Consideration, as amended, put off for six months.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### OVERCROWDING IN LONDON BOARD SCHOOLS.

Mr. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Commitee of Council on Education if he is aware that the statement, apparently on authority, that "habitual attendance" meant average attendance, is being interpreted to mean that in the Minute of the Committee of Council, dated 17th April, 1894, the words "habitually present at any one time" stand for average attendance; is he aware that most of the instances of overcrowding class rooms and congested classes in London Board schools, which have of late been made known, would be legalised, and to that extent justified, by the operation of Article 73, in its modified form, if the words "habitually present at any one time" may be taken to mean average attendance; and if he will state the exact meaning which the Department attach to the words in question, and will define what is to be the practice of the Education Department in deciding whether due effect is given by school managers to this portion of Article 73 of the Day School Code, 1894?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): I presume the hon. Member has in his mind words incidentally used by Lord Playfair, in another place, on the 19th of April last, that "the expression 'habitual' probably meant average attendance." These words were not meant as giving any exact definition of the words "habitually present," and I am not aware that the phrase is being interpreted as equivalent to "in average attendance." The intention of the words is to enable Her Majesty's Inspectors to take cognisance of periods of congested attendance, though the average attendance for the year may be within the limit allowed. The expression is, therefore, stronger than that of average attendance. The general object of the Article is to discourage the continuance of overcrowded rooms and congested classes, which have been reported to the Department as existing in various localities.

### SHEERNESS NAVAL GUNNERY ESTABLISHMENT.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that of the sum of £3,000 voted by Parliament in the Estimates for 1893-4 for necessary works in connection with the Naval Gunnery Establishment at Sheerness, no portion whatever has been expended thereon during the last financial year, can he state to what purpose was the said money devoted; whether the sums of £5,000, voted recently for erection of a drill battery, and £1,000 towards a rifle range, will be expended upon those necessary objects this year; whether he is aware that there is absolutely no latrine accommodation on the parade ground for the seamen drilling there, although their Lordships have approved of their being built and the matter is urgent; whether the men are sent to Gravesend in parties of 100, at an expense of 1s. 4d. each, by railway per week or fortnight, being absent three days or more, and have to be billeted in military barracks; whether urgent representations have been made to their Lordships on the various matters of drill, battery, and other necessary buildings to carry on the work of a gunnery school, for the past two years; why is this institution allowed to remain in its present condition, to the great injury of the Naval Service; and whether, pending the erection of a drill shed and other necessary buildings, arrangements can be made for the use of the ground floor of the large boat-house in the dockyard for drill purposes in wet weather?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): (1) A sum of £3,000, on account of a total estimate of £9,000, was voted in 1892-3, not 1893-4, for gunnery establishment, including new rifle range, but the expenditure was deferred pending reconsideration of the scheme. The money remained surplus at the end of the year. (2) The sums of £5,000 and £1,000, taken on account of these works, will be spent in the present financial year. (3) Arrangements are being made for entering into a contract for the necessary latrine accommodation. (4) Until the rifle range at Sheerness is ready it is necessary to send the men to Gravesend to obtain the requisite practice. (5) As regards the suggestion in the last paragraph of the question, I am advised that it would not be practicable to use the boat-house for this purpose.

ADMIRAL FIELD: What has become of the money?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: It is quite impossible to say. It was dealt with according to the Rule applicable to surpluses.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I have given ten days' notice of this question, and ought to be able to get a reply. Was it expended on behalf of the Naval Service, or was it sent back to the Treasury?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: No answer can be given with respect to any item not expended for the purpose for which it was intended. It may have gone back to the Treasury, or it may have been spent.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): May this money voted for Sheerness have been expended at other places?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: The money was not spent on the purposes for which it was voted. It became surplus, and fell under the rule under which surpluses are dealt with. It may have gone to other items in the Navy Votes, or it may not have been spent at all.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN: If it has not been spent at all it must be somewhere. Will it be spent on Sheerness?

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Are we to understand that there is no record whatever of the expenditure of surplus money?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Money which is voted and not spent may form part of a sum used for other purposes in the Navy, or it may go back to the Treasury. It is quite impossible to give information as to any particular item.

SIR A. ROLLIT: Is there no record?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: There can be no record.

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): Is no record kept of money transferred from one account to another?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: The money is not earmarked in any way, and you cannot trace any particular sum. All you can say is it was not spent for the purpose for which it was voted. It may be applied to other purposes with the consent of the Treasury.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Does the Comptroller and Auditor General make any Report on it?

[No answer was given.]

SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University): I think the hon. Gentleman is incorrect in saying that money voted for one purpose may be spent on another. Was the consent of the Treasury given in this case?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: Yes; if the money was applied to other purposes.

### REGIMENTAL CANTEENS IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state whether it is by the orders of the War Office that Commanding Officers of regiments stationed in cities in Ireland do not get their supplies of articles sold in canteens, including beer, &c., from local traders?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling, &c.): I have already stated, on several occasions in this House, that canteens are managed by committees, and that those committees are free to obtain supplies from any source they may select.

### CAVAN LAND COMMISSION APPEALS.

Mr. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether the Land Commission in hearing appeals in Cavan acted on the Report of Mr. Bomford, whose connection with landlords in the county has been the subject of comment and who has had no experience of farming tillage land, or whether they obtained any independent evidence; (2) whether he can say in how many cases recently heard in Cavan the rent was raised and in how many lowered; (3) and whether he has conveyed to the Land Commission any intimation of the general feeling against the employment of Court Valuers in places where they are connected with the landlord interest?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): (1) The Land Commission inform me that on hearing the appeals at Cavan they considered the evidence produced on behalf of the tenant and the landlord and also the Reports made by the Assistant Commissioners or by the County Court Valuers, and the Reports made by the Appeal Court Valuers in each case. Every case in which a judicial rent had been fixed by the Commission was valued and reported upon for the rehearing before the two Appeal Court valuers—that is to say, either by Messrs. Bell and Grey or by Messrs. Bomford and Callan. Mr. Bomford states that it is not the fact that he has had no experience of farming tillage land; that, on the contrary, he held for a number of years as tenant a large farm in rotation tillage. (2) There was no case at the late Cavan Sittings in which the rent was reduced. (3) On the 26th of April I expressed the opinion that it was extremely and obviously undesirable that the Court Valuer should be sent to a district in which he has connections amongst the landlords. This opinion I have communicated to the Land Commission.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL inquired whether those Appeal Court Valuers were not described as graziers and land agents in a Parliamentary Return, and whether persons so described were proper persons to be appointed to value tillage holdings?

Mr. KNOX asked in what county Mr. Bomford had a farm?

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he was afraid he could not go into Mr. Bomford's history. He believed the valuers did describe themselves as suggested by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and, judging from that description, he would not have thought persons so described were the best to be selected for the work.

Mr. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): Did the Commission act on the Report of Mr. Bomford?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have given all the information I possess on the subject.

### CANADIAN CATTLE TRADE.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, in view of the fact that a Canadian animal landed at Deptford on the 22nd of September was pronounced by the experts of the Board to be affected with contagious pleuro-pneumonia, if he still proposes to admit Canadian cattle into the country without being subject to slaughter at the port at the close of the further special examination which he has announced, if between that date and the present time no further cases of disease are discovered in cattle imported from Canada; within what period after a case of disease has been detected in animals arriving from any given country he considers that animals coming from the same country can be admitted with exemption from slaughter without exposing cattle in this country to the risk of contagious disease; and whether he contemplates that the examination in question will be completed before the expiry of the month of June?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I had, of course, given the fullest consideration to the fact to which the right hon. Member refers before making my recent statement on this subject, and, as I stated the other day, nothing has since occurred which leads me to modify that statement. It would be most undesirable that I should specify any particular period as being in all cases long enough after a case of disease has been detected to allow free importation to be resumed with the reasonable security required by the Statute. The length of time which has elapsed since the detection of disease is an important, but by no means the only, factor which it is my duty to take into account. I do not at present contemplate that the examination will be concluded before the date mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman.

### IRISH FISHERIES.

Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the Report of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries dated 20th April, 1893, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to establish a close season for herrings off the South-West coast of Ireland, as necessary for the protection of the mackerel fishery, from the 1st of April to the 16th of May in each year; whether he has observed that a great mass of evidence was tendered to show that the herring fishing carried on off that coast by Scottish fishermen is not at all injurious to the mackerel and hake which are fished for there during the same period by Irish fishermen; whether he is aware that the proposed close time would so shorten the season for herring fishing as practically to exclude Scottish fishermen from the Irish waters; and whether Her Majesty's Government will institute fuller and independent inquiries before taking any steps to bring into force the close season Order which is recommended in the Report above mentioned?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The recommendation made by the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries in their Report of the 20th of April, 1893, to the effect stated in the first paragraph of the question, can only be carried out by legislation. It is true that a large mass of evidence was given of the nature indicated in the second paragraph, but it is also the fact that a considerable amount of evidence in conflict with this evidence was adduced—amongst others by Scotchmen at Campbeltown. This rebutting evidence supported the contention of the Irish fishermen. The Inspectors carefully weighed the entire evidence, and having regard to the importance of the mackerel fishing, came to the conclusion that the views of the Irish, Manx, Lowestoft, and Campbeltown fishermen were, in the main, correct. With regard to the third paragraph, legislation in the direction referred to would, no doubt, shorten the time during which Scotchmen could fish, but by only four days, as by mutual arrangement the herring fishery has not commenced in recent years before the 12th of May.

### WATER-TIGHT BULKHEADS ON BATTLESHIPS.

Admiral FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether extra water-tight bulkheads have been recently or are being now fitted to H.M.S. *Sans Pareil*, at Malta, above her protective deck, by special desire of her Captain, as additional protection against disaster from injury by ram or torpedo; and whether the ships of the *Admiral* class, now in the Mediterranean, will be also similarly fitted with these extra bulkheads to give them increased protection?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): Extra water-tight bulkheads have been fitted at Malta in H.M.S. *Sans Pareil* above the main deck (top of belt), on the suggestion of her Captain, to give increased security under certain circumstances. The ships of the *Admiral* class do not resemble the *Sans Pareil* either in the disposition or in the number of the bulkheads between the main and upper decks, so that the suggestions made for the *Sans Pareil* do not apply to the *Admiral* class.

### BOMBAY AGRICULTURISTS' GRIEVANCES.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a Petition from the agriculturists of Panwel Taluka, in the Kolaba District of the Bombay Presidency, complaining of the enhancement of the Government demand at the recent revision settlement; whether he is aware that although it is a standing Rule of the Settlement Department that such enhancement shall not exceed 33 per cent. upon a whole Taluka, 66 per cent. on any one village, and 100 per cent. upon any individual holding, in the whole Taluka of Panwel the increase has been 44·8 per cent., in certain villages over 100 per cent., and in certain individual holdings over 1,000 per cent.; will he explain why it is that although under Section 107 of the Land Revenue Code, and Government Resolution of the 26th of March, 1884, the full benefit of improvements made by the owner at his own cost is secured to him, 7,000 acres reclaimed from the waste and converted into rice land at great expense have been charged the full assessment as arable land; whether the rural population of the Panwel Taluka has increased by 50 per cent. since the former settlement, without any proportional increase in the cultivated area; and whether, in view of the fact that the Petitioners allege that the enhancements are illegal and unjustifiable, he will direct an inquiry to be held by persons, official and non-official, unconnected with the Settlement Department, and pending such inquiry order the assessment to be collected at the old rates?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): My hon. Friend has been good enough to show me a copy of the Petition to which his question refers. In 1892, the Secretary of State, after full consideration, concurred in a recommendation of the Bombay Government that the standing limit of enhancement should be set aside in the case of Panwel Taluka and other tracts similarly situated. It was held that Section 107 of the Bombay Revenue Code, as amended by the Bombay Act of 1886, did not bar the revision of assessment on lands converted from waste into cultivated lands yielding hay and other valuable crops. The facts are approximately as stated in the fourth paragraph of the question; but the value of the produce and of the land has risen greatly, and the rental of land in Panwel Taluka ranges from two-and-a-half to seven-and-a-quarter times the new assessment. In the circumstances, I do not propose to take any action in the matter.

### SUNDAY LABOUR IN FACTORIES.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will undertake to instruct the Factory Inspectors under his Department to report how many men are employed in the factories and workshops they visit for an average of 12 hours a day in factories where the work goes on on Sundays as well as week days?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has given instructions for a Return to be prepared of the number of men employed in factories for an average of 12 hours a day where the work goes on on Sundays as well as week days.

### MILITARY PENSIONS.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if the former service of a soldier, when restored to him by War Office authority, is considered as equivalent to continuous service in computing the amount of his pension; and, if so, if he will meet the cases of non-commissioned officers (as stated in his reply of the 15th of June, 1893) who were deprived of the right to reckon their former service towards pension, under the Royal Warrant of the 1st of July, 1891, by extending to them the advantages of the Warrant of the 4th of August, 1893, irrespective of the date of their re-enlistment or the good conduct badges in possession on date of first discharge?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The case of non-commissioned officers has been specially regarded in the Regulation recently issued. Having been allowed to count the whole of their former service towards making up the period to entitle them to a pension, they may be able to earn their full pension.

### THE "SOBRIETY" FATALITY.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why no official inquiry has been held into the collision between the smack *Sobriety* of Grimsby and the steamship *Basset Hound*, sailing out of Hull on the 7th of April, 1894; whether he is aware that four out of five hands were drowned out of the crew of the smack *Sobriety*; and why no Board of Trade inquiry has been held into the cause of each man's death, in accordance with the law in such case as set forth in the Merchant Shipping Acts?

**The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. Burt, Morpeth) (who replied) said: I am aware of the unfortunate loss of life which occurred in the case to which the right hon. Gentleman refers. An inquiry into the cause of the deaths has already been held by the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and a preliminary investigation into the cause of the collision has also taken place. The Board of Trade have in addition ordered a formal official inquiry to be held, but this must stand over until the proceedings now pending in the Admiralty Court are concluded.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: Why have not the relatives of these unfortunate men been informed of the result of the inquiry? Surely the matter is of importance to them?

**Mr. BURT**: I will look into that.

### IRISH BANKRUPTCY ADMINISTRATION.

**Mr. ROSS** (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that great inconvenience is experienced by the traders and the commercial classes in the North-West of Ireland owing to the absence of a Local Bankruptcy Court; has a Memorial been presented to the Lord Lieutenant by the Londonderry Chamber of Commerce praying for the establishment of a Local Bankruptcy Court in Londonderry, pursuant to the Local Bankruptcy (Ireland) Act; and will the necessary steps be taken for the establishment of such a Court?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Memorial referred to in the question has been referred to the Lord Chancellor, who is now making inquiries into the matter, and will submit his recommendation with the least possible delay.

### POSTAL APPOINTMENTS IN DUBLIN.

**Mr. ROSS**: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has received a Memorial signed by all the members of the Dublin Letter Carriers' branch protesting against the proposed appointment of an official from the Parcel Post branch to a vacant post in the Secretary's Department of the General Post Office, Dublin; is the person proposed to be appointed a junior official in the Parcel Post branch; and has it been the practice hitherto to appoint a senior postman from the Letter Carriers' branch; if so, what are the reasons for the departure?

**The POSTMASTER GENERAL** (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): A Memorial has been received from postmen in Dublin appealing against the recent appointment of one of their own number to the post of messenger in the Secretary's Office. This Memorial is signed by 65 postmen out of a total number of 162. The postman appointed has been five years in the Service, and at the time of appointment was employed on Parcel Post duty. It has not been the practice hitherto to appoint to be messenger one of the senior postmen. Postmen, indeed, possess no stronger claim to the appointment than members of other classes; and the case is essentially one for selection.

### IRISH RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

**Dr. ROBERT AMBROSE** (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if there is any Rule or custom limiting the time during which a Resident Magistrate may be allowed to remain in a particular district; and, if not, would he consider the desirability of limiting the continuance of Resident Magistrates in particular districts to a fixed term of years?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: There is no Rule or custom of the nature indicated in the question, and I am not sure that it would be expedient for me to fix a time limit as suggested. A considerable number of Resident Magistrates have been five years and upwards at their present stations, and transfers are sometimes carried out at the request of Magistrates themselves for family reasons.

### PAUPER DISTRICT SCHOOLS.

SIR J. GORST (Cambridge University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether pressure is being at present applied by the Local Government Board to any of the Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis for the purpose of obtaining an extension of the accommodation in pauper district schools; and whether, in view of the proved inadequacy of the district school system for the proper education of pauper children, he will pledge himself that no extension of district schools shall take place until a complete and public inquiry has been held into the merits of the various methods of dealing with these children?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): There are cases in which additional provision for pauper children of Unions included in school districts is necessary, and the question how such additional accommodation should be provided is now under the consideration of the managers and of the Board. I cannot admit that there has been any proved inadequacy of these district schools. At the same time, the Board do not favour the aggregation of very large numbers of children in the same building, and careful consideration will be given to the question as to how the additional provision can best be made in connection with the circumstances of each particular case.

### MISCHIEVOUS SOLDIERS.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to several cases of alleged damage committed by a detachment of Royal Artillery billeted at Tenterden, in Kent, on the 15th instant, as described in a letter to *The Times*, of the 21st instant; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made, so that the persons who have suffered loss may receive prompt and sufficient compensation for all damage sustained?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No complaint of this damage was made by the landlords to the officer commanding the battery, who only learned what had occurred from a newspaper report. Some of the men have been punished, and are prepared to pay for the damage they have done. Any complaint addressed to the officer commanding the 20th Field Battery Royal Artillery, Aldershot, will receive attention.

### PARISH COUNCIL REGISTER.

MR. BRUNNER: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the new Registration Order, or in the Rules for elections, under the Parish Councils Act, paragraph 11 of the Registration Order of the 2nd March, 1889, could be modified so as to allow a copy of each Overseer's list being given to each accredited Party agent in each constituency?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Under the existing law any election agent can obtain a copy of the List on payment of a fee in accordance with the scale fixed by Schedule D to the Parliamentary Registration Act, 1843. I am advised that what is proposed by my hon. Friend could not be affected without legislation.

### MILITARY TROUBLES AT AGRA.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Her Majesty's Government can give the House any information as to the recent mutinous conduct of Native troops at Agra, and generally with regard to the reports of disaffection in India?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: With regard to the incident at Agra, I am informed that the insubordination was confined to two companies, was not of a serious nature, and was unaccompanied by violence; and that the Government of India attach no importance to the occurrence, which related to a dispute with Native officers, and was entirely unconnected with caste or religious feeling. I have seen in some of the newspapers conjectures and suggestions with regard to the existence of disaffection in India, but I have received no information which in any way confirms or supports them.

### MARINES AT FOREIGN STATIONS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any foreign stations have yet been garrisoned with Marines, especially the Falkland Islands, as suggested by the late Board of Admiralty; and whether a new South American Station has yet been formed out of the South-east Coast of America Station and the southern portion of the Pacific Station, or otherwise?

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The Falkland Islands have not been garrisoned with Marines, nor any other Foreign Station, with the exception of Esquimault. So far as I am aware, the late Board of Admiralty did not make any such suggestion, as the question assumes. A new South American Station has not been formed.

## LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, when any portion of an improvement scheme under the Labourers (Ireland) Act is objected to, the Board of Guardians promoting the scheme and having complied with the requirements of the law must either abandon the portions objected to or postpone carrying out the unopposed part of the improvement scheme until the merits of the disputed parts are investigated and decided upon; and whether it would be possible to obviate this often very long delay, and empower Boards of Guardians who have promoted an improvement scheme to proceed with carrying out the unopposed part of a scheme pending the investigation and decision by the proper authorities of the merits of the disputed portions?

MR. J. MORLEY: The facts are stated with substantial accuracy. I have already explained that it is not possible by administrative action to shorten the existing procedure connected with the carrying out of the Labourers Act, and I fear it would be quite impossible for the Government to introduce a Bill having for its object the amendment of these Acts.

## EX-INSPECTOR RUFF.

SIR A. ROLLIT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any Report has been furnished to the Home Office as to the punishment inflicted on ex-Inspector Ruff, of the Metropolitan Police; and, if so, what is the general nature of that Report; and whether he proposes to take any, and if so what, action in the matter?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Secretary of State has given the facts of this case his serious attention, and after full consideration he is obliged to decline to interfere.

## COLONIAL OFFICERS AND MILITARY APPOINTMENTS.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, in view of the fact that officers of the Colonial Forces have made excellent records in the "Long Courses," and that their names are honourably mentioned in the annual Reports of the School of Gunnery, if he would explain why it is that, notwithstanding the distinction thus achieved, such colonial officers are not eligible for appointment to adjutancies of Volunteers or Militia, while British Artillery officers, who go through precisely the same courses, are regularly appointed to such posts; is he aware that English Artillery officers hold highly-paid appointments in the Colonies; and does the present disqualification of colonial officers to hold appointments in England rest on Regulations that were framed at a time when the probability of colonial officers attaining high distinction in the Imperial School of Gunnery was not contemplated; if so, will he amend such Regulations in order to bring them into conformity with existing conditions, and place Colonial and British officers who distinguish themselves in the School of Gunnery on an equal footing as regards appointments in England?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is very creditable to the officers of colonial forces that they have devoted their time and money to qualify themselves professionally, and I am sure that the forces to which they belong will derive great benefit from their zeal and assiduity; but the hon. Member does not seem to be aware that the colonial forces are not technically a portion of the British Army. They are not under the Army Act, but are governed by their own local statutes, and consequently they have no power of command over soldiers or Volunteers in this country. British officers holding appointments in connection with colonial forces are sent at the invitation of the colonies in which they serve, and any powers of command which they exercise are conferred upon them by the Governments of those colonies.

## ADMIRALTY TENDERS.

**Sir F. SEAGER HUNT** (Marylebone, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will inform the House of the amounts of the various tenders received by the Admiralty for the building (with engines) of the following ships:—*Jupiter*, *Powerful*, *Mars*, *Terrible*, *Diana*, *Venus*, *Dido*, *Isis*, *Juno*, and *Doris*?

***Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: It would be contrary to precedent, and undesirable in the public interest, for the Admiralty to publish the amounts of all the tenders received for the ships which are to be built in private yards. Unsuccessful tenders are always treated as confidential. But a Return of the estimated cost of all these ships will be laid on the Table when the contracts have been completed for auxiliary machinery, armour, gun-mountings, &c.

**Sir F. SEAGER HUNT**: Will the figures of the accepted tenders be given?

***Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: They will be included in the cost of each ship.

## COMPOUND HOUSEHOLDERS' GRIEVANCES.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could lay upon the Table the statistical authority on which he based his argument as to the hardships inflicted on compound householder voters who have been disfranchised in consequence of the compounding landlord not having paid the rates compounded for?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: Statistics have not been obtained as to the number of cases in which voters have been disfranchised in consequence of the compounding landlord not having paid the rates compounded for. But our attention was called to the fact that such cases did occur, and deserved to be provided against.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: Are we then really to understand that there is no statistical information available for Members of this House?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: No; that is so.

## THE COMMITTEE ON THE MANNING OF SHIPS.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consider the advisability of adding two *bonâ fide* shipowners to the Committee on the Manning of Ships from the Opposition side of the House of Commons, seeing that only one of the four Members already nominated is a shipowner and three are supporters of the present Government?

**Mr. BURT** (who replied) said: I must remind the hon. Member that the Committee referred to is a Departmental one, and the hon. Members who have so kindly consented to serve were selected irrespective of their political opinions. Two of the four Members are interested in shipping, and there are besides three representatives of shipowners on the Committee. Indeed, an opinion has been expressed in some quarters that the shipowners have very full representation on the Committee.

## AGRARIAN RIOTS IN ASSAM.

**Sir W. WEDDERBURN**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the agrarian riots, arising out of the enhanced Government demand and the form of the new leases, which took place in December and January last in the Kamrup and Darrang districts of Assam; whether, in November, 1892, on the protest of the cultivators, the Chief Commissioner of Assam admitted that the proposed rates were too high, and recommended that the average enhancement should be reduced to 37 per cent.; that on the 27th of January, 1894, the Government of India decided that the enhancement should not exceed 32·7 per cent.; but that, nevertheless, the collections were commenced at the rate of 53 per cent.; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House all the Correspondence on the subject, including Mr. Ward's note dated 29th June, 1892, the Re-settlement Rules, the Memorials of the cultivators, the form of the new leases, and the resolutions passed at a public meeting held at Sibsagar on the 15th of April last?

**Mr. H. H. FOWLER**: (1) Yes, Sir. The attention of the Secretary of State in Council has been called to the agrarian riots in Assam. (2) The facts are not precisely as suggested in my hon. Friend's question. The Chief Commissioner's proposals for reducing the rates of assessment were made in November, 1893, not 1892. He proposed rates yielding an increase of 37 per cent. in the revenue instead of rates yielding an increase of 53 per cent., as had been suggested in 1892. Collections began, when the revenue fell due, at the lower rates proposed by the Chief Commissioner, and the people were informed that, if the Government of India made any further reduction in the rates, the full effect of such reduction would be given when the second instalment of the revenue was collected. The Government subsequently decided that the increase should not exceed 32·7 per cent. (3) I would suggest to my hon. Friend that, as the incident is now closed, it is hardly worth while to incur the trouble and expense of printing the Papers. The resolutions of the Sibsagar meeting have not yet reached me.

### MR. JOHN DILLON'S BALLYBROOD SPEECH.

Mr. ROSS: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a speech made by the hon. Member for East Mayo on Sunday last, at Ballybrood, near Limerick, in which he recommended that the occupant of an evicted farm in the neighbourhood should be boycotted; whether it was with the knowledge and consent of the police that the meeting was held about a mile distant from the farm referred to; and whether the Crown authorities propose to prosecute any of the persons who took part in this meeting?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have seen a report of the speech referred to. The meeting was held at Ballybrood with the knowledge of the police, and the Government were advised that there were no reasons for interfering with its being held at this place. The speech contains nothing that would furnish sufficient ground for a prosecution, nor was it directed specially against any particular individual.

Mr. ROSS: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman has he read the report of the speech in *The Freeman's Journal* in which the hon. Member for East Mayo is reported to have advised the people not to deal with, buy for or sell to persons on boycotted forms? And I have also to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has asked his Law Advisers if that is not an offence sufficient to warrant a prosecution? ["Order, order!"]

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal): No law here.

Mr. ROSS: I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary if any instructions have been given to the police not to permit meetings of this character to be held at a nearer distance than a mile from the boycotted holding?

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the question, might I ask him if he has seen a letter from the Secretary of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, advising persons not to deal with the house of Causton and Company because of a vote given in this House?

Mr. J. MORLEY: No, Sir, I have not seen that letter, but I will refer to it. In answer to the hon. Member for Londonderry, I have to say this meeting was not held within a mile of the holding referred to. The promoters were informed that no meeting would be allowed to be held within a mile of the evicted farm, and the meeting was not held within a mile of it. I read the report furnished to me, and it was taken from *The Freeman's Journal*, or some other paper. At all events, the words that were used were, as I understand, used in a general sense, and would not subject the hon. Member to a prosecution. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not notice that the Member for East Mayo added that "They were to leave them severely alone, and at the same time to abstain from all illegal means and from violence." In the opinion of the Government there were no grounds for a prosecution.

Mr. ROSS: Might I ask if he considers that if a person incites to crime—["Order, order!"]—and at the same time——

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is a mere matter of opinion.

Mr. ROSS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if a person incites to crime—["Order, order!" *and interruption*]—and at the same time states that it is to be committed——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

### THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

Sir A. ROLLIT : I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is now in a position to inform the House the terms and conditions of the tenancy of Burlington House by the Royal Academy ?

*The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. H. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The main building of Burlington House is held by the Trustees of the Royal Academy on a lease from the Commissioners of Works for a term of 999 years from Christmas, 1866, at the rent of £1 per annum. There are provisions in the lease involving its forfeiture in the event of the Academy dissolving itself, or in case of the premises being disposed of without the consent of the Government, or used for any purpose inconsistent with the existing objects of the Academy. The Academy undertook to erect an additional storey and other buildings, and to keep the whole of the premises in repair and insured against fire. It was decided by the then First Commissioner of Works (Lord John Manners) not to insert any definition of the objects of the Academy, but hon. Members will understand the circumstances and conditions under which the grant was made by referring to Sessional Paper 227 of 1866. I may, however, call the attention of the House to the fact that, under a guarantee given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1835, the Government were bound, on calling upon the Academy to vacate the eastern portion of the present National Gallery, to provide an equivalent for the Academy elsewhere.

### COED-Y-PAIN SCHOOL.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) : I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the cloakroom erected in 1891 at Coed-y-Pain, Monmouthshire, on the recommendation of Her Majesty's Inspector, and verbally approved by him, has now been condemned ; and whether, under the circumstances, he will re-consider the case ?

Mr. ACLAND : Her Majesty's Inspector states that this cloak-room was only accepted by him in 1891 under the late Government as a temporary expedient, and as some improvement on a very bad existing state of things in the school, and that this was made abundantly clear by him at the time to the late rector. I do not see any sufficient reason for considering the case.

### POSTAL CONFERENCE IN CANADA.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state the decision arrived at by Her Majesty's Government as to the representation of the Mother Country at the forthcoming Conference at Ottawa in June, to consider the question of improvements in the commercial, postal, and telegraphic communications of the Empire ?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) : No representative has yet been appointed, but the matter is engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

### MUNSTER SQUARE SCHOOLS.

Mr. GRAHAM (St. Pancras, W.) : I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the St. Mary Magdalene, Munster Square Schools have, during the last 17 years, been examined by three or four different Inspectors, and in each case pronounced satisfactory ; whether he is aware that the Report of the Education Department of the 17th of March, 1894, finds such fault with the ventilation and lighting of the infant school as would make it impossible to continue the school in the same locality ; and whether, under these circumstances, he will make inquiries with the view of a reconsideration of the matter by the Department ?

Mr. ACLAND : After the inspection of this school in November last Her Majesty's Inspector reported that the lighting and ventilation of the infant room was very unsatisfactory. The matter was gone into with great care, and the Senior Chief Inspector visited the school in January. He reported that, in his opinion, no part of the room was properly lighted, and that some parts of it must be very prejudicial to the children's eyesight. It appears that owing to the breadth of the room and the arrangement of the windows, less than one-third of the floor area can receive a proper supply of light. The managers were informed on the 17th of March that unless some satisfactory proposal as to the lighting were made the room could not be recognised after the current year. The matter has been so very fully and carefully considered that I am unable to undertake any revision of the decision arrived at.

### CORDITE.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether contracts are being obtained from private firms for the supply of cordite; whether he hopes to secure any economy by this means; and whether he would consider the desirability of establishing an alternative Government manufactory apart from Waltham Abbey, and so preserve the secret of the process of manufacture and secure a constant supply, notwithstanding any accidental or other dislocation of the machinery?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Tenders are about to be invited from private firms for the supply of cordite. It is hoped that as private firms gain experience in the manufacture their prices may approximate to the Government factory prices, but, as the latter contain nothing for interest or profit, it is not anticipated that private firms will ever supply at factory prices. It is considered that sources for the supply of cordite should exist in the private trade of the country, which should effectually prevent the possibility of any inconvenience arising from accident. There is no secret in any of the processes of the manufacture.

Mr. LOUGH: Would it not be better to have another Government factory for it?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. I do not think it would be desirable to have the manufacture entirely in the hands of the Government.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Will the Government supply special machinery for the manufacture of cordite?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir.

### THE SEIZURE OF THE "BLUEJACKET."

Mr. CLARENCE SMITH (Hull, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any information respecting the seizure of the Hull steam trawler *Bluejacket* by a German torpedo boat on the 27th of April last; whether it is true that the skipper, Mr. W. Sorrensen, has been detained in prison and put upon black bread for nearly a month without being brought to trial; and whether he will take steps to require his trial without further delay?

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL: Is Mr. Sorrensen a British subject?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): I believe he and his family live at Hull, and he has command of a British trawler. I conclude, therefore, that he is a British subject. In reply to the question on the Paper, I have to say that the facts of the case were reported to the Foreign Office directly the seizure was made. The charge against Mr. Sorrensen is one of fishing within German territorial waters. As the case has not yet been tried, I cannot express any opinion upon its merits. The British Vice Consul at Brake visited Mr. Sorrensen whilst under arrest, and afforded him all assistance in his power. No complaints of ill-treatment or bad fare are known to have been made to the Vice Consul. Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin has been instructed to bring the case to the favourable consideration of the German Government with a view to the trial taking place at an early date.

### SCOTCH INSPECTORS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Kincardineshire, I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will lay upon the Table of the House the names of the Inspectors of Secondary Education in Scotland who have been acting during the past 12 months, stating their usual occupations, and the remuneration paid to each; whether the Inspectors for the next year have yet been appointed; and if he will lay upon the Table of the

House the same information regarding them also ?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): There are no appointments to the post of Inspector of Secondary Education; but I have no objection to lay upon the Table a list of the gentlemen employed as occasion arose last year, with their designations and the remuneration paid to each. The arrangements for each year are not complete, but there is no objection to the issue of such a list at a later date.

### THE SALTCOATS CROFTER SETTLEMENT.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state whether the inquiry promised on the 13th of November last into the case of Alexander Young, a crofter settler, residing near Saltcoats, Assa, Canada, who complained that he and his family had received ill-treatment from the agent of the Imperial Colonisation Board has not yet been made; and, if so, will he state the result of the inquiry ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The case of Alexander Young has been inquired into. It appears that in August, 1892, he left his wife and family in Saltcoats to obtain work elsewhere. In November the colonisation agent saw him at Killarney, and was informed by him that he had no intention of returning to Saltcoats. In the meantime, his family was being supported by the generosity of their neighbours, and he was also assisted by the agent of the Board. The Inspector of Police brought their destitute condition to the knowledge of the agent, and Mrs. Young applied to him in writing for assistance to join her husband. As Young, like all the other crofter colonists, had received advances from the Colonisation Board, and had given the agent a lien on his chattels and stock, the latter took them over to enable Mrs. Young and her children to join her husband. Finally, he returned to Saltcoats last June.

### DUNPHAIL RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the result of the inquiry by the Inspecting Officer of the Board of Trade into the accident to a night passenger train on the Highland Railway, near Dunphail Station, on the 27th of April last; and whether all the carriages of the train referred to were fitted with automatic continuous brakes, in accordance with the instructions of the Department to the Highland Railway Company last year ?

MR. BURT (who replied) said: The hon. Member will obtain all the information he requires from the Report on the accident which was yesterday presented to Parliament.

### FISHING LICENCES IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, having regard to the fact that the Government on the 28th of March, 1893, had it in contemplation to arrange for licences being granted to fish salmon and other fish of the salmon kind around the coast of Scotland, he will state if such an arrangement has now been decided upon; and, if so, how many licences have been granted, the cost of each licence, and whether public notice has been given that such licences may be obtained by fishermen ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this question. Mr. Stafford Howard, the Commissioner in charge of the Land Revenues of the Crown in Scotland, is about to invite applications by public advertisement for licences at certain places in the Counties of Argyll, Ayr, Inverness, and Ross. He is also about to visit the East Coast of Scotland, in order to ascertain by personal inquiry and inspection what should be done in regard to granting licences to fish for salmon in the sea. No licences have yet been granted, and in regard to the East Coast district the fishings are at present held under leases which do not expire until Martinmas next.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of giving County Councils in Scotland control over these licences ?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I will consider it, but I may point out that Mr. Stafford since he has been at the work has shown a great desire to adopt a wide and generous policy in this matter.

### DANISH SMOKELESS POWDER.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has received any information since 11th of September, 1893, as to the action of Danish smokeless powder cartridges, containing no nitro-glycerine (hard metal-covered bullets), on the barrels of Maxim guns; if he has yet ascertained whether erosion of the regulation barrel is attributable to the shape of the nickel-covered bullet, the character of the rifling, or to cordite; and whether a better class of steel has been introduced in the manufacture of the regulation barrel since the 11th of September, 1893?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: No information as to the action of Danish smokeless powder on the barrels of Maxim guns has been received at the War Office. Recent experiments appear to point to the desirableness of a change in the character of the rifling of the barrels of Maxim guns. As regards the steel for the barrels, an amended specification was adopted in November last, modifying some of the tests formerly required.

### THE CURATORSHIP OF THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL GALLERY.

**Mr. ROBERT WALLACE** (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland how long the office of Curator of the Scottish National Gallery has been vacant; and when the necessary steps will be taken for making a new appointment?

***Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Mr. Gourlay Steell, the late Curator, died on the 31st of January last, and the vacancy was reported to the Board of Manufacturers at their first subsequent meeting, held on the 1st of March. The Curator has to be appointed by the Board of Manufacturers, subject to the approval of the Secretary for Scotland. An appointment has been postponed pending consideration of a Report by a Committee of the Board, which will be brought up on the 31st instant, and the question of making a new appointment will be considered at the Board's ordinary meeting on the 7th of June.

### THE FORRES BOROUGH AUDITORSHIP.

**Mr. BEITH** (Inverness, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that upon a Petition from the Magistrates and Councillors of the Royal burgh of Forres, acting under "The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892," for the appointing of an auditor to audit the burgh accounts, the Sheriff of the Counties of Inverness, Elgin, and Nairn, passed over the Sheriff Substitute of the district, who usually makes such appointments, and nominated his son, Mr. James Ivory, chartered accountant, Edinburgh, for the office; if the Sheriff may, if he chooses, make a similar appointment in each of the 10 burghs within the counties of his Sheriffdom, and may, in the event of any dispute as to the auditor's salary, fix what the amount shall be; and whether, in view of the fact that the Royal burgh of Forres is 200 miles distant from Edinburgh, and that there are many local men fully qualified and ready to do the work, he will take steps either to cancel what has been done, or to prevent its recurrence when the auditor comes to be appointed next year?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: This was the first appointment under the Burgh Police Act of 1892, but similar appointments have in the past been made by the Sheriff and not by his substitute. The Sheriff has complete discretion in appointing an auditor. There was a provision in the Burgh Police Act of 1862 giving the Sheriff power to settle the auditor's remuneration in case of dispute; but that Act is repealed, and there is no corresponding provision in the Act of 1892. The Sheriff informs me that, in his opinion, no fully qualified local men were available. With regard to this statement, I can only say that the Town Council, on the ground, among other considerations, that there were competent local professional men available, passed a unanimous vote protesting against the action of Sheriff Ivory in appointing his own son who is resident in Edinburgh. It is difficult to believe that, in face of such a vote, the Sheriff will persist in the appointment.

**Mr. BEITH**: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of introducing a Bill transferring the power of making these appointments from the Sheriff to the Local Authorities?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN** said, that was a matter which he had under consideration.

## THE AUSTRALIAN MAIL CONTRACT.

**MR. HENNIKER HEATON** (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is now in a position to state the cause of the delay in calling for tenders for the Australian mail contract; whether it is true that he has extended the present Australian mail contract; if so, on what terms and for what period; whether any representative of the British Post Office attended the New Zealand Conference, or whether the negotiations are being carried on entirely with the Agents General; whether it is the intention of the Postmaster General to hold a special Conference on the question with the Representatives of the Australian Governments; and whether he has any objection to state the date when official communications were commenced with the Australian Governments regarding the terms of the proposed new contracts?

**MR. A. MORLEY**: The resolutions of the Brisbane Conference on this subject were communicated to the Imperial Post Office on the 5th of June, 1893, since which date I have been in direct communication with the Colonial Post Offices and the contractors, and have arranged, with the consent of the Wellington Conference, expressed through the President, to prolong the existing service for one year on present terms, that is up to the 31st of January, 1896, in order that full time might be given for the consideration of all the points raised by the colonies. I am now awaiting the arrival by post of the full text of the resolutions of the Wellington Conference, at which I was not represented; and until the full text comes I cannot say whether a Conference with Australian representatives will be necessary.

## IMPORTED MEAT.

**MR. J. W. LOWTHER** (Cumberland, Penrith): In the absence of the hon. Member for Wigton, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture when he proposes to introduce the promised measure dealing with the importation of foreign and colonial meat?

**MR. H. GARDNER**: I propose to introduce the Bill on Monday next.

## THE LONDON CAB STRIKE.

**MR. LOUGH**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the intimidation by the Association of Cabowners of certain proprietors who had entered into a lawful arrangement with the Cabdrivers' Trade Union as to the price they should charge for their cabs, whereby these proprietors were compelled to withdraw from the said arrangement; and whether he will instruct the police to afford protection to cabowners who are disposed to accept the rates suggested by the Trade Union?

**MR. GEORGE RUSSELL** (who replied) said: Instances of the sort of conduct described in the first clause have been submitted to the Home Office, but we have not yet been able to investigate them. We believe that the police are alive to their duty in this regard.

## POLICE EVIDENCE OF DRUNKENNESS.

**MR. H. J. WILSON** (York, W.R., Holmfirth): I beg (1) to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of two miners, Simms and Broadhead, of Cawthorne Basin, who were arrested on the 3rd of March, detained all night in the Barugh Green Police Station, and charged before the Barnsley Magistrates on the 7th of March with being drunk and disorderly; (2) whether he is aware that although evidence in support of the charge was given by Sergeant Humphries and Police-constables Rollinson and Walker, yet the Magistrates preferred the evidence for defence, which prove that they were perfectly sober and orderly, and dismissed the case; (3) whether he is aware that abundant evidence is forthcoming to prove that Police-constable Walker was at Darton at the time when in his evidence he swore that he saw the defendants at Claycliffe, a distance of nearly two miles from Darton, and cautioned them; and (4) whether he will cause inquiry to be made as to this evidence, and also make further inquiry into the conduct and evidence of the above-mentioned police officers?

**MR. GEORGE RUSSELL** (who replied) said: (1) Yes. (2) No. The Justices have informed the Secretary of

State that in dismissing the case they were giving the prisoners the benefit of the doubt to which the evidence in their favour had naturally given rise; and the Chairman, when stating the decision of the Court, said that—

> "There was a strong conviction in the minds of the Bench that the prisoners were not sober at the time, and that they were not conducting themselves properly."

(3) No. The Secretary of State has made inquiries, and sees no reason to doubt the truth of the constable's evidence. (4) The Justices found that the police had acted properly.

## INSANITY IN IRELAND.

**Mr. J. REDMOND** (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he has observed that the Special Report of the Inspectors of Lunatics on the alleged increase of insanity, recently presented, conflicts with their statutory Reports, annually laid before Parliament, on the subject of increase, and whether any explanation of the difference can be given; and whether he will lay upon the Table the Reports of the Resident Medical Superintendents of the several district lunatic asylums, upon which the special Report in question has been founded, for the information of hon. Members who take an interest in the subject?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I am informed by the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums that in their statutory Reports, annually presented to Parliament, they expressed the opinion that the increase of insanity in Ireland was absolute as well as relative, and they founded this opinion on the increasing number of first admissions to asylums, and the larger number of cases brought under official cognizance. Upon fuller inquiry, and having regard to the special information obtained in the Reports from the different lunacy districts, the Inspectors, in their special Report to which reference is made, have now expressed the opinion that, as at present advised, the absolute increase of insanity is not large, and is limited to certain districts. The Reports referred to in the second paragraph of the question will be published in full in the next statutory Report of the Inspectors to be laid on the Table in the course of a couple of months.

*Mr. George Russell*

## LABELS ON LONDON CABS.

**Mr. BOULNOIS** (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of the molestation of cabmen at Islington, engaged in the lawful pursuit of their calling, in *The Standard* of the 21st instant, and will he instruct the police to give more efficient protection; whether his attention has been called to the proclamation, issued by the London Cab Drivers' Trade Union, in which it is stated that, on and after the 16th of May, no cabs are to run on the streets unless bearing the label supplied by the Secretary of the Union. at the offices, 1, Long Acre, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., and that any cabs running on the streets after this notice, and not bearing the Union label, will be blacklegs, and as such to be treated; and whether, after a driver has paid 5s. for his licence, and the cab proprietor £2 for a licence, and 15s. Carriage Tax, it is an infringement of the Hackney Carriage Act to compel a driver to affix a label to his cab before being allowed to pursue his calling; and, if so, will he take steps to require the removal of the labels now in use?

**Mr. WEBSTER** (St. Pancras, E.): Is it the fact, as is generally reported in the London newspapers, that the number of licences granted to drivers is in excess of the requirements of the Metropolis; and will the Chief Commissioner of Police be instructed not to grant more licences until the matter has been inquired into?

**Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL**: I will submit that point to the Home Secretary when he returns. In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Marylebone, I have to say that the statements referred to in the first paragraph are reported to us to be incorrect. I can only assure the hon. Member that the police are fully alive to their duty to repress intimidation, by whomever practised. The statement made in the second paragraph I believe to be correct. I am advised that the action described in the last part of the question does not constitute an infringement of the Hackney Carriage Acts.

**Mr. BOULNOIS**: Is a cabman, then, entitled to put any label he chooses on his cab?

**Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL:** *Latet dolus in generalibus.* I cannot undertake to answer that question.

### ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS.

**Mr. CHAPLIN** (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can state what proportion of the sum of £90,860, estimated for the general revision of the 6-inch and 25-inch maps of Great Britain for 1894-5, will be required for the completion of town scale maps already in hand; what has been the total amount expended by the Ordnance Survey upon the production and publication of town maps on a scale larger than 1-2,500th; what is the number of such maps; what has been the average amount annually spent on the revision of such maps; and what is the proportion of town maps that have been made on a scale less than 1-2,500th?

**Mr. H. GARDNER:** The proportion of the sum of £90,860 provided in the Estimates for 1894-5 for the completion of the re-survey of Scottish counties and for the general revision of the 6-inch and 25-inch maps of Great Britain, which will be required for the completion of town maps on the 10-foot scale already in hand, is £56,000. The estimated expenditure on the production and publication of town maps on a scale larger than 1-2,500 is £550,000. The approximate number of such maps is 14,000. The average amount annually spent on the revision of such maps since 1870 is £3,800. No maps of towns have been made on a scale less than 1-2,500 since the commencement of the Cadastral Survey, and our present proposals do not involve any alteration in this respect.

**Mr. WEIR** inquired how much of the money would be set aside for Scotland?

**Mr. H. GARDNER** said, he would inform the hon. Member on Report of the Vote.

### CULTCH.

**Major RASCH** (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he proposes to introduce the Bill relating to cultch?

**Mr. BURT** (who replied) said: A Bill on the subject referred to by the hon. and gallant Member has been drafted, and is at present under consideration. It will be pressed forward as rapidly as possible.

### THE AMERICAN MAIL ROUTE.

**Mr. FIELD** (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been directed to the meetings in the Mansion House, Dublin, with reference to the American mails *viâ* Queenstown; and whether he can state when a reply will be given to the requests of the deputation to the Chief Secretary of Ireland on this subject?

**Mr. A. MORLEY:** I have received copies of the resolutions passed at the meeting held at the Mansion House, Dublin, on the 18th instant, and reports of the deputation which waited subsequently on the Chief Secretary. I am happy to be able to say that the Government has decided to terminate the existing contract, and the necessary steps will be at once taken for inviting new tenders.

### DUBLIN MAIL CART DRIVERS.

**Mr. FIELD:** I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has made any arrangements to have the Fair Wages Resolution of this House carried into effect by the contractor who employs the mail-cart drivers in Dublin and elsewhere over Ireland?

**Mr. A. MORLEY:** Yes, Sir; I have given directions to that effect in Dublin and in every other case of a new contract.

### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL:** I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether Her Majesty's Government deem themselves to be bound by the Resolution of the House of Commons of the 13th of February, 1891, as to rates of wages to be paid in carrying out Government contracts; whether the rate of wages referred to in the Resolution is the rate demanded by the spokesmen of that section of working men who are Trades Unionists; and whether he will state what proportion of wage earners in the United Kingdom belong to established Trades Unions and what proportion do not?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT:** The Government holds itself bound by the Resolution of the House of Commons passed on

February 13th, 1891, which requires the Government—

> "To make every effort to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen."

I have no authority to limit or add to this definition. I am informed by the Board of Trade that, roughly speaking, there are about 1,500,000 members of Trade Unions, but they are unable to give any exact figures as to the other class.

## MILITARY SERVICE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any representations have been made that British citizens resident in the territories of the South African Republic have recently been ordered to join in an armed expedition against the natives of the Northern districts of the Transvaal; whether such residents enjoy franchise rights or have any other constitutional voice in the government of the country; and whether in any other civilised State foreign residents are liable to compulsory military service?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: Such a representation was received on the evening of the 22nd by telegram, and is engaging the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

## LIVERPOOL BOUNDARIES.

**Mr. FORWOOD** (Lancashire, S.E., Ormskirk): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has yet come to a decision on the Report of the Local Government Commissioner who, on the 10th of April, held an inquiry as to a re-arrangement of the ward boundaries of Liverpool; and when a Provisional Order dealing with this matter and the extension of the city boundaries is likely to be introduced?

**Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE**: The Local Government Board communicated their decision to the Town Council of Liverpool on the 22nd instant. The Board do not propose at present to proceed with the Order for the incorporation in the city of the districts which were proposed to be added.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: I shall raise this question on the Vote on Account.

*Sir J. T. Hibbert*

## WEATHER FORECASTS FOR FARMERS.

**Mr. STRACHEY** (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether it is proposed to repeat the experiment of telegraphing the weather forecasts to telegraph offices in rural districts for exhibition during the time of harvest; and, if so, what are the arrangements to be made for the purpose?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: Yes, Sir, we propose to repeat the experiment of last year, and we have selected for the purpose the counties of Cambridge, Somerset, Carnarvon, the East Riding of Yorkshire, Haddington, and Ayr. The forecasts will be dispatched to rural telegraph offices at such periods as will suit the agricultural conditions of hay and corn harvests in the respective counties, and I trust that those interested in the matter will be willing to supply information as to the results of the experiment, so that we may be able to determine whether the system is of sufficient utility to justify its continuance and extension.

## KILLYBEGS HARBOUR.

**Sir MARK STEWART** (Kirkcudbright): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if any steps are being taken to prepare Killybegs Harbour for a mail packet station by making a pier or otherwise adjacent to the railway on the water's edge, so that full access to this deep-water harbour would at all times be assured; and is he aware that if this harbour was thus made serviceable for large steamers 100 miles of sea would be saved to transatlantic passengers?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: I am not aware of any such steps, nor can I say whether the owners of transatlantic passenger steamers would be prepared to use Killybegs Harbour if made serviceable.

**Mr. DANE** inquired what had been the result of the communication addressed by the Board of Works to the Treasury with reference to the erection of this pier, which was promised a long time since?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: I have no information on the subject.

## AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION IN ESSEX.

**Mr. ROUND** (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is considering the Report of Mr. Hunter Pringle to the Royal Commission on Agriculture upon the corn-growing districts of Essex, recently printed; if his attention has been directed to that portion of the Report which refers to the increasing average of derelict farms, and to the deplorable facts of farm houses, farm buildings, and labourers' cottages falling into ruin in many parishes; and if he can hold out any hopes of action on the part of the Government with the view to remedial legislation?

Mr. DODD (Essex, S.E., Maldon): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether Mr. Pringle is correct in stating that the tithe per acre in land in Essex under all crops is 6s., whereas in Lancashire it is only 1s. 9¼d., and that if the tithe is taken on the basis of population it represents 6s. 4½d. in Essex and only 4½d. in Lancashire?

Mr. H. GARDNER: I must ask for notice of that. In reply to the hon. Member for Harwich, I have to say that I hope it is unnecessary for me to assure the hon. Member that I have watched the agricultural position in Essex with the greatest attention and sympathy for some time past; and with regard to Mr. Hunter Pringle's Report upon particular districts of the county, I am sure that the Commissioners to whom that Report is addressed will give the statements it contains their most earnest consideration. The concluding question of the hon. Member is identical with that addressed to the Leader of the House by the hon. Member for the South-Eastern Division of the county, to which my right hon. Friend will subsequently reply.

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester): Do the Government intend to grant a day for the discussion of this question?

Mr. H. GARDNER: I cannot answer that question. It should be addressed to the Leader of the House.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the attention of the Government has been called to the concluding paragraph of the Report of Mr. Hunter Pringle, Commissioner to the Royal Commission on Agriculture, with reference to the County of Essex, in which it is stated that so serious are the complications involved that it seems as if the district might well become the subject of distinct and special Government supervision and assistance; and whether the Government are prepared to adopt Mr. Pringle's proposal; if not, whether they will give a day for the discussion of the matter, in order to lay before the House and the country the ruin of the agricultural classes in the County of Essex?

Mr. DODD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say if the figures in Mr. Pringle's Report to which I have alluded are correct?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt; Derby): No Sir. The attention of the Government has been directed to the evidence given before the Royal Commission, including the Report referred to in the question; but they cannot announce any action upon it until the evidence and the Report have been considered by the Commission, and their recommendations have been brought under the view of the Government.

Major RASCH: As the right hon. Gentleman cannot immediately assist us, will he allow the map attached to the Report—a map which shows 60 miles of derelict farms in the County of Essex—to be exhibited in the House, so that hon. Members may appreciate the agricultural situation in the county?

Sir W. HARCOURT: That would be a very unusual proceeding, but I will consider if it can be done.

Mr. ROUND: When is the Commission expected to report?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am not in a position to say.

## RESULTS FEES IN SCOTCH SCHOOLS.

Mr. MAXWELL (Dumfriesshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, under Article 17 (b) of the Scotch Code, 1894, the managers of a school will be allowed to pay a teacher partly by a fixed sum and partly by share of the Parliamentary Grant, after paying assistants and pupil teachers; and, if not, whether sufficient time will be allowed to the managers to make such arrangements for the payment of the teacher as will satisfy the new conditions of the Article referred to before the grant is in any case withheld?

Sir G. TREVELYAN: The practice of farming a school to a teacher is one which the Department has uniformly discouraged, and the present Code gives more distinct expression to the objection taken to it. Each case must be judged by its own circumstances, but generally the Department thinks that the payment of assistants and pupil teachers ought not to affect the salary of the principal teacher. The Department will be prepared to make a reasonable allowance where the managers have hitherto followed an arrangement which cannot be approved, but which they are prepared to modify. But here also each case must be judged on its own merits.

### THE BALFOUR COMPANIES.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Attorney General how long is it since the Board of Trade sent to the Public Prosecutor the Registrar's Report and other necessary documents relative to the officials and directors of the various Balfour Companies; and whether he has yet arrived at any decision as to the desirability of instituting further proceedings?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL (Mr. R. T. Reid, Dumfries, &c.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer for my right hon. and learned Friend. The question of instituting further proceedings has been and is under consideration, but it would not be for the public benefit that any further statement should now be made.

### IRISH CHURCH TEMPORALITIES FUND.

Mr. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is now aware that the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt are charging the Irish Church Temporalities Fund interest at $3\frac{1}{2}$ and $3\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on loans amply secured, the excess of the interest over 3 per cent. amounting to £19,000 a year; whether he is aware that other Irish Public Bodies under popular management, especially the Dublin Corporation, have been able to borrow in the open market at a lower rate of interest; and whether he will take steps either to induce the National Debt Commissioners to reduce the rate of interest to 3 per cent. or, in the alternative, empower the Land Commissioners to raise a loan at 3 per cent. to pay off the debt owing to the National Debt Commissioners?

*Sir G. Trevelyan*

Sir W. HARCOURT: The money advanced by the National Debt Commissioners on Terminable Annuities to the Irish Church Fund is an investment made by them out of the money of the Savings Banks, and it would be impossible to interfere with that investment by the course proposed in the question without injuriously affecting the Savings Banks Fund.

Mr. KNOX: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that answer would not apply to all loans made by the Public Debt Commissioners?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir; so far as it relates to the Savings Bank Account. At present the Savings Bank Account is dealt with at a rate of interest which is barely paying its own working, and I do not see how that rate could be reduced, and therefore we are obliged to be very careful with respect to receipts on the Savings Bank Account.

Mr. KNOX: Do I understand that this Irish Account has to make up the interest for English investors in the Savings Banks?

Sir W. HARCOURT: You are not to understand that at all. At the time this loan was made it was made at a rate of interest which was considered a proper rate, and we cannot interfere with it until the end of the time for which it was issued, or we should be interfering with the Savings Bank Account for the purpose of benefitting other people.

Mr. KNOX: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that this loan is repayable at any time that the Land Commission choose to repay it, and that they are empowered to call for money in the open market for that purpose, and whether it would be any breach of their contract with the National Debt Commissioners if they paid the money at once?

[No answer was given.]

### INCOME TAX ON LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN IRELAND.

Mr. E. BARRY (Cork Co., S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Income Tax assessed on cottages built under the Labourers (Ireland) Act in the Clonakilty Union has been remitted; whether there is any difference in respect of right from exemption of Income Tax on rent of labourers' cottages between Clonakilty and all the other Unions in Ireland; and whether steps will be taken to relieve all the other Unions in Ireland from this tax?

***Sir W. HARCOURT**: In the case of the Clonakilty Union, the tax has been, after investigation, remitted. With regard to other Unions, the title to relief must depend on the special circumstances of each case. Applications should, in the first instance, be made to the Inland Revenue Office, Dublin.

### THE NEW ESTATE DUTY.

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of the revenue that he estimates would accrue from the new Estate Duty would be derived from property situated outside the United Kingdom, in foreign countries and British Colonies or Dependencies respectively?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I am afraid I cannot give any figures; they are too uncertain.

### CABINET MINISTERS' SALARIES.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government have considered the question of the re-arrangement of the salaries attached to the principal Ministerial Offices as promised both by him and the Secretary to the Treasury in the Debate last Session, on the Vote for the Salary of the Lord President of the Council; and, if not, whether the Government would agree to the appointment of a Select Committee of this House to inquire and report thereon?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I have referred to the Report of the discussion on September 8, 1893, mentioned in the question, and I cannot find that either the Secretary to the Treasury or I myself gave any promise on this subject.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: Was not the Motion withdrawn on the understanding that the Government would take up this question?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I think not.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: I will raise the question again on the Vote on Account.

### PUBLIC TRUSTEES.

**Mr. HENEAGE**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the responsibilities thrown upon executors and trustees by the provisions of the Finance Bill, the Government will consider the urgent necessity of introducing a Bill for constituting public trustees and executors, and passing it through all its stages during the present Session?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I should be very glad to see such a Bill, but I cannot undertake to pass it this Session.

### WELSH DISESTABLISHMENT BILL.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state approximately when he proposes to take the Second Reading of the Established Church (Wales) Bill?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I cannot at present name a day. I hope it will be an early day.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: Will it be before or after the Evicted Tenants Bill?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: That I cannot say.

### LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table a Return giving the Correspondence between Shipowners, Chambers of Commerce, Mr. John R. Wigham, Members of Parliament, the Commissioners of Irish Lights, the Trinity House, the Board of Trade, and others, on the subject of Lighthouse Illuminants, which has taken place since the issue of the last Return on the subject (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 92, of Session 1893-4)?

**Mr. BURT** (who replied) said: I must refer the hon. Member to the reply given to him on the 12th of December last, when my right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield said that the Correspondence had been published up to the end of February, 1893, and that that which ensued had not been such as to justify the cost incident to the printing of it at the public expense. There is very little which has occurred since that reply was given.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL**: Is the hon. Gentleman aware there has been some additional Correspondence?

**Mr. BURT**: Yes; but I understand it would involve considerable expense to print it, and it is not thought the outlay would be justified. I shall be happy to let the hon. Member see the additional Correspondence.

## THE LATE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

**Mr. MUNDELLA** (Sheffield, Brightside): Mr. Speaker, I am confident that I shall not appeal in vain for the indulgence of this House to grant me that which is never denied to Members who desire to make an explanation in connection with their personal position. When this House rose for the Recess, Sir, I had the honour of holding a responsible Office in Her Majesty's Government and the privilege of sitting with my colleagues on the Ministerial Bench. As hon. Members are aware, that Office I no longer hold and that privilege I no longer enjoy. While it is not within this House that I can deal with personal considerations affecting this change in my position, I cannot allow it to pass entirely unexplained. When, some weeks ago, my name was first mentioned in connection with certain legal proceedings, I thought it right at once to place my official position entirely at the disposal of the Prime Minister. For the generous consideration extended to me by him I desire to make the fullest acknowledgment, and I wish it were within my power to express my sense of obligation and to repay the debt I feel I owe to those with whom I have been recently associated. But, Sir, as time passed on, I recognised that, in the interests of the Office over which I presided, it was necessary that I should reconsider my position. I felt that the public had a right to be assured that the administration of the duties attached to my Office should be free from the slightest suspicion that any conflict might arise between personal and public considerations, and so it was I determined to cease to be the President of the Board of Trade. It may be, some will say, that I should have urged the acceptance of my first resignation. I will not dwell upon the friendly reluctance of the Prime Minister to consent, but I will make one personal confession. Few know how much attraction the discharge of the duties of my Office had for me. I was able to deal with subjects with which throughout my life I had been associated, and to attain results for which I had worked long and hard. To leave unfinished the task a man has set himself to accomplish is a sacrifice I can scarcely exaggerate, and certainly I was reluctant to make it. Having done so, I trust the House will not misunderstand me when I say that, however much I regret the severance from official life, I still enjoy some consolations. My colleagues can no longer be attacked through me, and suspicion, for which there was never the slightest foundation, can no longer attach to my Department. It will be my effort, thus freed, as a private Member of this House, to strive for the same objects and to labour for the same principles in the future as those with which my past life has been identified. One word more. Conscious of right, my mind is fully assured that when all I have done in connection with my personal affairs shall be fully and fairly ascertained, my friends and the public will know, as I know now, that I am entitled to declare that throughout my life, which has been dependent upon my own exertions, I have preserved my character free from stain or dishonour. I thank the House for having allowed me to make this statement.

## BREAKING A PAIR.

**Mr. STOREY** (Sunderland): I do not wish to intrude upon the House a personal matter, and I am tenfold more reluctant after the touching statement of the right hon. Gentleman the late President of the Board of Trade. But honour to every man is dear. Charges are made against every man—some great and small. My name has been trumpeted abroad, together with that of another hon. Member, in connection with what is called a "broken pair." Newspaper paragraphs on such a matter one gets accustomed to; I feel that newspaper men are perfectly entitled to make criticisms, and one does not complain. But my hon. Friend behind me, the hon. Member for Totnes (Mr. Mildmay)—whose name has been associated with mine in this affair—went down to his constituency the other day and made a speech. Someone there appears to have accused him of breaking a pair, and he seems to have been defending himself; but in defending himself he attacked me. The statement of an hon. Member of this House, when he impugns a brother Member's character, is, after all, a rather serious matter. My hon. Friend said—

> "Unfortunately, Mr. Storey applied to Mr. Anstruther, the Liberal Unionist Whip, for a pair. Mr. Anstruther offered him Mr. Austen Chamberlain as a pair, and Mr. Storey accepted the pair and left the House. The next day Mr. Storey telegraphed to Mr. Anstruther to say that he had seen in the newspapers that Mr. Austen Chamberlain had been injured, and he intended to break his pair. Mr. Anstruther protested strongly against such an unprecedented action."

And then the hon. Member for Totnes added—

> "It appeared to him that the man who was entitled to blame was Mr. Storey, who deliberately broke his pair."

It is no part of my business to make any attack upon the hon. Member. I am perfectly sure of this—that if he voted on the Thursday evening, from all I know of him, he felt that he was honourably entitled to do so. But I think I have—and I hope he will agree with me—a right to complain a little that, without ever notifying me, or without being personally cognisant of one of the facts, he went down to his constituency, and in defending himself accused me as the person who was guilty of dishonourable conduct. I wish to tell the hon. Member and the House that the statement that I accepted the pair and left the House is not founded on fact; the statement that the next day I telegraphed to the hon. Member for St. Andrews is not the fact; the statement that the next day the hon. Member for St. Andrews remonstrated with me is not the fact; and that the statement that I broke the pair is, I think, utterly outside the fact. I was in the Lobby on Monday, May 7, asking everybody for a pair. The hon. Member for St. Andrews said, "If you want a pair, I can give you one." I inquired, "Who is he? Do not give me a dead one." He replied, "Mr. Austen Chamberlain." I said, "That's all right." But, being old-fashioned, I added, "Can he come?" The answer was, "Well, he wants to come; he is only at home." I said, "All right." I went into the smoke-room; I took up a paper, and I read there that the hon. Member (Mr. A. Chamberlain), to the regret of all of us, had been gored by a bull. I felt that, if the hon. Member for St. Andrews knew that fact, I would not be bound by the pair; but, if he did not know it, I should feel myself bound by the pair. I immediately came back to the House—indeed I did not leave it until 12 o'clock. I sought the hon. Member for St. Andrews; and when at last I found him I continued the conversation. Turning round to him, I said, "Did you know when you paired me with Mr. Austen Chamberlain that he had been gored by a bull?" He replied, "No; I knew he had met with a slight accident, but had not the particulars." I said, "But you did not even tell me that. Understand now, I am not bound by that pair"; and I added, "and I do not think you treated me quite fairly." That was on the Monday, and the voting was to be on the Thursday. I, therefore, gave ample opportunity to the hon. Member to get another pair. But that is not all. When I said that, the hon. Member made no remark within my hearing. On the Tuesday I went north, where I was bound to be. I did not receive, either in person or by letter, from the hon. Member for St. Andrews, or from anybody on his behalf, any remonstrance or any suggestion that I was to be bound by the pair. I returned to the House on Thursday night. While I stood at the Bar, the hon. Member for St. Andrews passed me, and, turning to me, he said—and this was the first communication I had with him from the moment I had spoken to him on the Monday—"Are you going to vote"? Upon which I replied, I fear rather sharply, "Why do you ask? Why not"? He made no reply, and walked into the House. When the Division bell was rung, I walked into the Lobby and voted. Up to that moment I did not know that the hon. Member for Totnes was paired, nor had I from anyone the slightest intimation that I was bound on the Thursday to a pair which I had repudiated on the Monday.

MR. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes): I am very glad that this question has arisen, because it affords me an opportunity of defending my position. For some considerable time before the Division on the Budget, one of the Government Whips offered me a pair in the week beginning Monday, the 7th of May. Before I accepted that pair, I stipulated that if I was able to be in London in the latter part of the week I should be at liberty to transfer that pair to some other

Unionist Member. That stipulation the Government Whip accepted. Before I left the House on Monday, the 7th, I explained to the hon. Member for St. Andrews the circumstance under which I had made the pair. On the following day, Tuesday, I wrote to him to say that, as I could be in the House in the latter half of the week, he was at liberty to transfer my pair to some other Unionist Member. On the following day, Wednesday, I got an intimation from him to the effect that I should be required to vote in the Division, as my pair had been transferred to the Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. J. A. Chamberlain). I came up to the House, like the hon. Member for Sunderland, on the Thursday evening, and on learning that the Government Whips objected to my voting, I, before going into the Lobby, ascertained, on the authority of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, that so far from being incapacitated the hon. Member for East Worcestershire was prepared to come up to town and to record his vote had he not been informed that he was paired. After consideration it appeared to me to be distinctly my duty to record my vote. I thank the hon. Member (Mr. Storey) for the courtesy with which he has alluded to this matter, so far as I am myself concerned, and I, of course, accept his correction that his protest was made on the same evening as that on which he was asked to pair, and not on the next day. I acknowledge that I was wrong in that detail, though I do not think that is material. I understand, however, that the hon. Gentleman objects to the terms in which I alluded to his repudiation of the pair. I acknowledge, as he says, that I was not in the House during the greater part of the week, and I have no doubt that the hon. Member for St. Andrews (Mr. Anstruther) will speak directly on that point. But I can assure the hon. Member for Sunderland that, however much we may have questioned his action, I feel convinced that in pursuing that action he was impelled by a desire to do his duty to his constituents. The hon. Member has been in the House longer than I have, and his reputation for integrity and honesty of purpose cannot be questioned. I can, further, assure him that if any words I have used have caused him pain I am sincerely sorry. On the other hand, I hope that he will remember that I had been accused by the leading organ of the Government in London of deliberate, dishonourable conduct. That accusation had been disseminated throughout my constituency, and I think the House will agree with me when I say that there is little wonder that, in the face of such an accusation, I repudiated with considerable warmth a charge under which, I think, no Member of this House would be inclined to sit quiet.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, &c.): I am very reluctant to obtrude myself upon the House; but as reference has been made to me, I think it is only courteous that I should say a word or two upon the subject in question. As regards the two hon. Members who have spoken, I think the explanations they have given must be perfectly satisfactory, and I need not say anything further with regard to them. But with reference to the version which the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) has given of what passed between us on Monday evening, I may say—and my recollection on the subject is, I think, as clear as his seems to be—that when the hon. Member came to me in the Lobby I told him everything I knew with regard to the slight accident that had occurred to my hon. Friend the Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. J. A. Chamberlain), and it is in my recollection—although I am quite certain that he will not bear me out—that I said to him, "I don't know whether you will think that good enough." I do not think frankness could have gone further—and I am quite sure that the hon. Gentleman, after this explanation on my part, will acquit me of any intention to deceive him or to misrepresent the facts of the case. I will only say, on behalf of us who undertake these somewhat delicate operations for the different Parties in this House, that it is a practice not for the convenience of the House, nor for our convenience, that these matters should be brought before the House. When personal questions between Members arise, it is, no doubt, their duty to make explanations in the House in order to set aside any reflections that may have been cast upon them; but as far as slight discrepancies between us are concerned, I do feel strongly that those are matters which should not be brought under the cognizance of the House, as the House can take no official notice of them, and the operation, therefore, becomes futile. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman will acquit me of any intention to misrepresent the facts of the case.

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): Affecting this delicate question, perhaps the hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Chamberlain) will give us the nationality of the bull referred to.

[The subject then dropped.]

## *MOTION.*

### IRISH EDUCATION BILL.

### MOTION FOR LEAVE.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I rise to ask the House for leave to bring in a Bill to amend and explain the Irish Education Act passed by the late Government in 1892. I trust the House will allow me to read the Bill a first time to-day, but it is not without importance, and I will take care that it is not put down for Second Reading until ample time has been allowed for its consideration, both in this House and in Ireland. The Act of 1892 has been found by experience to contain two defects. The first is administrative, and the second relates to expenses. By the Act of 1892 the School Attendance Committees have to be chosen half by National Boards and half by Local Authorities. Half of each Attendance Committee is to be chosen from Managers or Trustees of schools. Owing to the legal interpretation put upon this provision of the Acts, it has been found to be impossible to get a proportional representation of the Religious Denominations upon these committees. This Bill will make it discretionary for the Local Authorities and the National Board to say what proportion of each committee shall be School Managers or Trustees. The second defect in the Act affected the expenses of its administration. The draftsman used the expression "local rates"—a phrase which has no particular application in Ireland—and we propose by this Bill to enact that the Local Authority shall be able to devote to the expenses for carrying out of provisions of the Irish Education Act any local rate or funds it may have under its control or to levy a special rate for the express purpose of the administration of the Act. The Bill itself is very short and very plain. The need for it is urgent if there is to be a carrying out of the intention of Parliament expressed in the Act of 1892. With the promise that gentlemen from Ireland shall have ample time for the consideration of the Bill, I hope the House will now allow me to introduce it.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend and explain 'The Irish Education Act, 1892.'"—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) said, he wished to raise a strong protest against the introduction of the Bill. When the Education Act of 1892 was passed, it was on the distinct understanding that the schools of the Christian Brothers should be included in the national system of education. The object of this Bill was to bring the Act into operation in those places in Ireland where the strong feeling of the people had prevented it from coming into operation on the ground that the schools of the Christian Brothers had not been included in the system of national education. He failed to see where the obstacle for the inclusion of the Christian Brothers' schools in the system of National education lay, unless it were in the Chief Secretary himself. The pledge given by the right hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Jackson) when Chief Secretary on the passing of the Bill in 1892 was that this matter would be referred to the National Board. It had been referred to the National Board, which had decided in accordance with the feelings of the vast majority of the Irish people; but the Lord Lieutenant had put aside the decision of the National Board, and had refused to include the Christian Brothers in the national system of Education. He (Mr. Knox) could not refrain from raising a protest against what was, on the part of one Party or the other, a breach of faith with the Irish Members. The Christian Brothers had already, by the operation of those clauses of the Act which were in force, been put to very great difficulty. There were many places in which they were now carrying on their work under much greater difficulties than any other people who were engaged in elementary education in the United Kingdom. Members above the Gangway complained because their voluntary schools in England had to raise about 5 or 10 per cent. of the total cost of education by means of local subscriptions, but the Christian Brothers had to raise the whole cost of their schools by means of subscriptions from the people. He confessed that he looked at this matter as much from a secular educational point of view as from the point of view of the Christian Brothers. The Christian Brothers had built up what educationalists in this country had long been striving for—a bridge between the elementary system and the University system. Boys of poor parentage were enabled to pass by degrees from the elementary stage in the Christian Brothers' schools through the secondary stage to the Universities, and he protested in the name of education against this effort to strangle the attempt of the Christian Brothers to give to the poor children in Ireland the means of bettering themselves in life. He believed this Bill was not justified by the circumstances in Ireland, and, therefore, even at that initial stage, he raised his voice against it.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.) rose to continue the discussion.

*Mr. SPEAKER : Under the Standing Order I can only allow an explanatory statement to be made on behalf of the different sections of Members.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) : May I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the Standing Order does not apply to Thursdays ? Otherwise, how could we have debated the Welsh Disestablishment Bill as we did ?

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is specially provided for by the Standing Order relating to matters at the commencement of Public Business.

Mr. T. M. HEALY : I have not the Standing Order by me, Sir ; but surely the Welsh Disestablishment Bill was brought in at the commencement of Public Business and was debated ?

*Mr. SPEAKER : The Standing Order I am referring to relates to the introduction of Bills at the time of Public Business. That is a technical term which refers to the period before the Orders of the Day are entered upon.

Mr. W. REDMOND asked whether he would be in Order in inquiring of the Chief Secretary whether he could hold out some hope that the pledge given by his predecessor in Office would be fulfilled ?

Mr. J. MORLEY was understood to say that he could make no statement on that point.

Mr. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) : I must altogether deny that there was a pledge.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 247.]

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

### COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis), rising to a point of Order, said, he desired to take the ruling of the Speaker upon a very simple, but rather serious, point, the importance of which the House would appreciate when he stated it. He charged the Finance Bill with having gone beyond the Resolution upon which it was founded. Standing Order 58 laid down that the House would not proceed upon any Bill for granting money except upon a Resolution passed in Committee of the whole House. Accordingly, Resolutions had been passed, and the Preamble of this Bill set forth that the Commons had "freely and voluntarily resolved to give and grant the several duties hereinafter mentioned." But on examination it would appear that one of the several duties imposed by the Bill had not been resolved upon by the Commons—he alluded to the increased Succession Duty embodied in Clause 15. That clause provided for a very great extra charge on real property by way of Succession Duty, since it provided that the value of the succession should be taken for the purpose of tax, not, as at present, on the value of an annuity of the net annual value, but on the principal value of the property. Taking as an illustration the average age of successors at 44, their interest would, under the present law, be represented by 14 years' purchase or thereabouts, and the charge would be on £14,000 odd; but if the same succession were to be taxed, as the Bill proposed, on its "principal value," that would be represented by 24 2-5th years' purchase, or £24,400, an increase of charge on over £10,000, and the duty payable would be, under Clause 15, far heavier than at present. But that was not all. This duty at present was paid by half-yearly instalments, and the successor practically got 4½ years' credit. But Clause 15 required that the duty should be paid within 12 months, or else that interest should be paid on the unpaid balance at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. His position was that the clause did make a great increase in the duty, and that no Resolution had been passed in Committee of Ways and Means upon which the clause could be founded. If objection were made that this point should have been taken before Second Reading, he would point out that the practice was to allow errors which could be cured in Committee to be so remedied. But this was an error which could not be cured in Committee. It was a vice of origin. The defect was that Clause 15 had not the foundation to stand on—a Resolution—which it should have. It might be held that the House could not, under the words of the Standing Order, proceed with this Bill, inasmuch as it did not originate in Committee of the whole House, and that it might be necessary to discharge the Order for going into Committee, and to withdraw the Bill. He hoped, however, that the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair would take a more merciful view of the Standing Order and would rule that the House might proceed with the Bill from Clause 1 to Clause 14. He submitted, however, that when the House reached Clause 15 it would find itself without the necessary Resolution required by the Standing Order, and that before that clause was reached, therefore a further Resolution would be absolutely necessary. He desired to obtain the right hon. Gentleman's ruling upon this important point of Order.

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is important that the Resolution passed in Committee of Ways and Means should cover exactly all the provisions of the Bill subsequently introduced, and the hon. Gentleman has done right in referring to the importance of the matter, and also, I think, in drawing attention to that particular clause, Clause 15. In my opinion, the original Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means, upon which this Bill is founded, did not contemplate the extra imposition of duty which may be involved by the operation of Clause 15. Under these circumstances, it will be necessary not to withdraw the whole Bill, as the hon. Member seems to contemplate, but, before we come to the clause, to go into Committee of Ways and Means and adopt a new Resolution which will cover the particular clause. But as the hon. Gentleman has referred to the possibility of withdrawing the whole Bill, I may say that in 1881 in the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill of that year there were two clauses which were not covered by the original Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means—namely, those which related to the Stamp Duties on the transfer of property and to the Stamp Duty on the transfer of Stocks and Shares; and the consequence was that, before considering those two clauses, the House went again into Committee of Ways and Means and passed two subsequent Resolutions covering those clauses. Therefore, when Clause 15 is reached, the House will take no cognizance of it, unless a Resolution of the Committee of Ways and Means authorising the additional duties imposed by the clause has been previously agreed to. It will be necessary for the House to go into Committee of Ways and Means and pass a Resolution that will cover the additional duties before the Committee can consider the clause.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt): I thank you, Sir, for the clear explanation you have given to the House upon this point. The hon. Member was perfectly right in calling attention to what was certainly an oversight. The view taken by the Government when this Resolution was drawn up was that, as the Succession and Legacy Duties were not interfered with in the way of raising the rate, it was not necessary to deal more specifically with them in the general Resolution which was passed. But the fact was overlooked that, although the duties were not raised, the result of the method of assessment would be to raise, in many cases, additional sums. Under these circumstances, it will be necessary to have the general Resolution made more specific, so as to apply to the Succession Duty and covering and providing for the alteration in the method of assessment and the levying of that duty. I will take care that at the proper time that matter shall be brought forward in Committee of Ways and Means, and that the Resolution shall be so drawn as to remove any doubt upon the subject and make the clause regular.

**Mr. GOSCHEN** (St. George's, Hanover Square): Sir, I rise to a point of Order. It is necessary that the matter should be brought forward as soon as possible, and I therefore desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman when he will be able to bring on the Resolution. Until we know whether the Resolution will be carried it will be difficult for us to estimate the full effect of the Succession Duty. That Resolution is necessary to the Government proposal as a whole, and though it may not be necessary to withdraw the Bill, I venture to urge that it is desirable to bring the Resolution forward at the earliest possible moment, in order that we may be in possession of the decision of the House in Committee upon a point which it seems to me is of very considerable importance.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I will consider when the Resolution can be brought before the House.

**Sir J. LUBBOCK** (London University) moved—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill into two parts, and in the first place to report to the House the portion relating to Customs and Inland Revenue."

He said, the course proposed by the Government would establish a bad precedent, and deprive the House of Commons of its just right to have every distinct subject presented separately for debate and decision in a distinct Bill. To find a real precedent they must go back more than 100 years. If hon. Members would look at Clause 37 and compare it with the Preamble of the Bill they would at once see how incongruous it was. The Preamble recited that certain provisions were to be enacted—

> "Towards raising the necessary Supplies to defray the public expenses and making an addition to the Public Revenue;"

but Clause 37 had nothing to do with raising Supplies or with making an addition to the Public Revenue; it did not grant any Revenue, nor was it covered by any part of the Preamble; it dealt with a totally different subject, and one of great importance. It dealt with the Suez Canal shares and the interest on the loans for Imperial and Naval Defence in a way which had no relation to the Preamble. That was under Sub-section 3. With regard to Sub-section 4 there was nothing to constitute a charge upon the Consolidated Fund. Then the next Sub-section 5 was a repealing section. None of those sub-sections had anything whatever to do with the Preamble of the Bill. He did not say that the Bill was actually out of Order, because he presumed it was covered by the ruling of the Speaker that this was not a question exactly of Order, but one of policy which it was desirable for the House to adopt. What were the precedents? In 1787 Mr. Pitt included in one Bill the provisions for raising new duties consequent on the Treaty with France—those to effect the consolidation of the duties of Customs and Excise, and a provision relating to the Debt. As regarded the Treaty there were considerable differences of opinion, and Mr. Bastard moved an Instruction to divide the Bill into two, because it was unconstitutional to combine two separate objects in one Bill, and by that means deprive Members of their undoubted right to discuss and vote on each subject separately. To put the Commercial Treaty under convoy, so to say, of the part relating to the consolidation of duties, was a most pernicious example of coupling distinct considerations which ought to be kept separate. He was supported by a man whose words ought to carry great weight with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary for Scotland. Mr. Fox, in supporting the Motion, said—

> "Not only had their constituents a right to know the reason that governed their votes upon each separate and distinct measures, but they, as Representatives, had a right to insist that their reasons for voting upon every distinct measure should be known; and in the present case it was impossible for their reason to go to their constituents. They might be called one day to vote for the Bill on account of the consolidation of dutes being approved, and the

next day to vote against it on account of the Commercial Treaty being disapproved."

Then, quoting from *Hansard*, Sir Grey Cooper, in the course of the Debate, referred to several precedents of cases from 1680 to 1774, and averred that whenever two distinct matters had been combined in one Bill, an Instruction for separation had never been refused. Those earlier precedents were not available in *Hansard*, and he had not been able to obtain them, but the statement of Sir Grey Cooper was not challenged as inaccurate. Mr. Pitt, however, he need not say, carried his point. It seemed, however, to have been generally felt that the course taken was unconstitutional, and there was no repetition of the precedent until the year 1861, if, indeed, that could be called a precedent. In the previous year the abolition of the Paper Duties, which had been carried in that House on the Third Reading by a majority of nine only, was thrown out in the House of Lords, and in 1861 the repeal of the Paper Duties was voted in Committee of Ways and Means, instead of being inserted in a separate Bill. On the Second Reading of the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill, Mr. Pope Hennessy raised the point; but the Speaker, without expressing any opinion on the policy, ruled that, though the proposals of the Government went in some respects beyond the service of the year, they were all required for the service of the year. It would, however, be observed that the course now proposed went far beyond the case of 1861, because, after all, the provisions of that year referred to duties, while the present Bill dealt with questions having no relation whatever to duties. The only other case approaching to a precedent which he had been able to find was in 1877, when a provision of minor importance relating to savings banks was introduced into the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. He was not sure whether in that year any proposal was made to divide the Bill. He would not pretend to say that there might not be some other precedent, but, unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer could cite some, it would seem that the precedent of 1787 was the only one since 1680. Surely the fact that there was only one precedent in 200 years, and that more than a century ago, was a strong reason against the course which the Government asked the House to adopt. But if there were no precedents for the course taken by the Government, there were plenty the other way. He would refer only to two. In 1885, when Mr. Childers thought it necessary to suspend for a year the Sinking Fund, he introduced his proposal in a separate Bill; and in the following year, 1886, when his right hon. Friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer held the Office he now held, he also suspended for a time the Sinking Fund, and thought it necessary and right to do so in a separate Bill. If it was right that those matters should be dealt with in a separate Bill when the Budget proposals were simple, it was surely far more important in the case of a Budget which contained matters much more complex, much more doubtful, and much more debateable. Moreover, the present proposal made a permanent change, while that of 1886 affected only the year itself. He maintained, then, that there was only one precedent in 200 years, and that more than a century ago; that the clause dealing with the income of the Suez Canal shares and the two Defence Acts had nothing to do with imposing taxes or levying duties, which was the proper function of the Committee of Ways and Means; and that they could not be fairly described as raising supplies or making an addition to the Public Revenue. In fact, Clause 37, which raised questions of great importance, was entirely out of place in a Ways and Means Bill. If they allowed the Bill to go on as it was, following obsolete precedents, they would be setting a bad example, and for those reasons he begged to move the Instruction which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill into two parts, and in the first place to report to the House the portion relating to Customs and Inland Revenue."—(*Sir J. Lubbock.*)

Sir W. HARCOURT: I have some difficulty in understanding the object of the Motion of my right hon. Friend, because, as regards the actual proposal as to the Sinking Fund, there is, as far as I know, no serious opposition in this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, in his criticisms of the other parts of the Bill, took care to invite me to adopt the course of treating the moneys under the Naval Defence Act as part of the Debt, and therefore, so far as the substance of that proposal is concerned, it may be taken as agreed upon by all Parties. My right hon. Friend says, "Oh, but it is right and proper that every separate subject in finance should be discussed in separate Bills." I take issue with him on that. As a matter of fact, the rule is exactly the opposite. It is very remarkable that my right hon. Friend should have found it necessary to attack the financial policy of Tory statesmen for the last 100 years. He attacked Mr. Pitt's Budget—the greatest ever known. I will read to the House what the title of that Budget was, and then the House will judge how far we have departed from traditions and established principles of finance in this country. Now, the title of the Budget Bill of Mr. Pitt was this—

> "An Act for repealing several duties of the Customs and Excise, and approving other duties in lieu thereof, for permitting the importation of certain goods, wares, and merchandise into this country, and for applying certain unclaimed moneys remaining in the Exchequer for the payment of annuities on lives in reduction of the National Debt."

My right hon. Friend denounced Mr. Pitt. I have not the courage to do that.

**Sir J. LUBBOCK**: I beg pardon; I did not denounce Mr. Pitt.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: At all events, my right hon. Friend disapproved of Mr. Pitt's proposals. If my right hon. Friend will allow me to say so, I prefer to err with Mr. Pitt rather than be right with my right hon. Friend. There grew up, no doubt, afterwards a practice under which different taxes were placed in different Bills. In 1860 the House of Lords took advantage of that situation to reject the Paper Duties Bill, and to, in fact, destroy in that way the financial proposals of that year. During the Administration of Lord Palmerston a Committee was appointed to consider how to deal with that action of the House of Lords. There were many recommendations made upon the subject, and among them one which specially commended itself to the House of Commons. And here again my right hon. Friend comes into conflict with a Tory statesman. Having disapproved of Mr. Pitt's, he now disapproves of Mr. Disraeli's plan. Mr. Disraeli said, in July, 1860—

> "I come now to the second method of defending our rights,"

—that is, the rights of the House of Commons, which had been imperilled and injured—

> "the second method suggested by my right hon. Friend, and, I take it, adopted in the Resolution;"

—that was, a Resolution of the House of Commons in defence of their rights against the House of Lords—

> "that is, by insisting that the whole of our financial scheme shall be embodied in one Bill."

—that was condemning the principle for which my right hon. Friend contends—

> "We do not—at least I for one and the Prime Minister for another do not—question the right of the House of Lords to reject such a Bill; but, of course, the responsibility for such a step would under these circumstances be greatly enhanced, and the difficulty of disturbing the financial arrangements of the House of Commons proportionately increased. For my own part, Sir, I have no objection to such a course; I should have liked, for example, that that course should have been pursued this year; I should have liked to have had the whole scheme of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in one Bill."

That was the course approved by Mr. Disraeli in 1860, and that was the course adopted in 1861, when the precedents were fully discussed. Lord Russell made a statement then with reference to Mr. Pitt's action in 1787 in the great Budget referred to. This is what Lord Russell said on May 13, 1861—

> "Next year came the memorable Act to which my right hon. Friend has alluded. It was a year in which Mr. Pitt accomplished very great public objects. By means of a Commercial Treaty he settled our relations with France upon a footing likely to tend to the benefit of both countries, and by an elaborate and minute investigation of the Customs and Excise he framed 3,700 Resolutions, by which the various Excise and Customs Duties were reduced under a single and separate head. A Bill was introduced and sent to the House of Lords embracing the Commercial Treaty; and, likewise, a measure of consolidation. He also imposed a tax by that Bill. When that Bill went to the House of Lords it was argued by Lord Carlisle, 'There are three different objects: We may approve the Commercial Treaty; we may not approve the consolidation; above all, we may object to the tax. Let the Bill be divided, and do not let the House go into Committee.' But he was answered by Lord Sydney, who at that time was Secretary of State, 'All these matters belong to one arrangement, and tend to one end.' That is, in fact, the question in the present Bill. These different matters all form part of one arrangement, and tend to

one end—namely, the settlement of the finance of the year."

From that time to this that has been the accepted doctrine, and it must still be accepted if the House of Commons intends to preserve its rights over the finance of this country. I begin to suspect why it is that the right hon. Gentleman, with the support of hon. Members opposite, wants to go back to the system under which the House of Lords was able to overthrow the finance of the year. Hon. Members opposite want to go back to a system which was condemned by a Committee of this House, by Mr. Disraeli, by Lord Palmerston, and by Lord John Russell—the principle of not putting the whole of the financial proposals for the year into one Bill. The right hon. Baronet said that the case of Mr. Pitt is the only precedent, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian quoted cases previous to that where such powers have been given. He quoted the Act of George I., in which the granting of the taxes was based on the Act itself, with full authority to levy Exchequer bills; and there are a number of other instances with which I need not trouble the House, in which measures relating to the Debt have been put into a Bill with the same Preamble as that the right hon. Baronet has referred to as being inconsistent with treating different financial proposals in different Bills. It is a remarkable thing that in 1861 the very Motion that is made now by the right hon. Gentleman was made by Mr. Newdegate, who was not fortunate enough to get the support of the responsible Opposition of the day. He moved—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to divide the Bill so that each of the taxes to which it relates can be treated separately."

That is the view that was taken at that time The right hon. Baronet having the same Motion, I may mention to him that Mr. Newdegate——

SIR J. LUBBOCK: That is not the same Motion as mine. I propose that all taxes should be taken together, but that the part of the Bill that has nothing to do with taxes should be taken separately.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman's arguments were against that. What does the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman suggest? Why, that whether the matter referred to is a tax or a question like this, dealing with £2,300,000, this House should place in the hands of the House of Lords the power of ruining the whole of the financial arrangements of the year by rejecting one of the Bills into which it is proposed to divide the proposals contained in the Budget Bill. This, of course, is the object to which the Motion of the right hon. Baronet is directed. I have shown how the right hon. Gentleman has disapproved the conduct of Mr. Pitt and the words of Mr. Disraeli; and, as I have said, Lord John Russell declared:—

> "These different matters all form part of one arrangement, and tend to one end—namely, the settlement of the finance of the year."

A little later on there was an Act passed relating to Customs and Inland Revenue, and in this Act Savings Banks were included. Savings Banks cannot be said to have anything to do with taxes, and yet the two came under the same Preamble. The Preamble of that Act says that Her Majesty's faithful Commons have resolved to give and grant unto Her Majesty the several duties mentioned in the measure, and under that Preamble there is found a whole section dealing with Savings Banks, and therefore affecting the Debt. In this case we have again an instance of a Conservative Minister bringing in a Bill relating to Customs and Inland Revenue, and including proposals relating to Debt in the form of Savings Banks. That is a complete answer to every argument that has been used by the right hon. Gentleman. His argument from the Preamble disappears altogether. Before I framed this Bill I took great care to ascertain that it was founded upon sound precedents, and I have not yet exhausted the list of them. In 1880 (on March 11) Sir S. Northcote introduced a Bill relating to the Probate and Administration Duties which had not formed part of the Budget and which had not formed part of the Financial Statement, and he, having the Budget Bill and this Bill in existence, said—

> "What I would now propose to do would be to read the new Bill a second time concurrently with the Budget Bill, and then to move that there should be an Instruction given to the Committee to amalgamate the Bills into one, so that the practice, the very proper practice, of

this House having all its financial arrangements in one Bill and sending them up to the other House in that form may be preserved."

Here, then, you have a Conservative statesman who amalgamates two Bills in order that the financial arrangements of the year might go up to the House of Lords in one measure. But now you are proposing to upset the whole practice and the principle established in 1787 by Mr. Pitt, and maintained in 1880 by Sir S. Northcote, in order, apparently, that you may give the House of Lords control over the finance of the country. You seek to separate the Bill in order that with impunity the House of Lords may reject part of it; yet every precedent, every authority, is in favour not of separating, but of amalgamating all the measures relating to the finance of the year. I have indicated one object which may be aimed at by this Resolution; but there is another, and that is, that it would waste a great deal of time. If you could succeed in having two Bills you would have two separate Statements, two Committ es, two Reports, and two Third Readings. You could waste a number of days by this process of separation. I confess that one of the great objects of the procedure which we have adopted is to economise the time of the House. I think that it is for the public advantage that the House of Commons should keep absolute and entire control of the finances of this country. It was found necessary to establish that principle in 1860 when it had been violated in the case of the Paper Duties. But there are special reasons, in my opinion, in the case of the present Budget why we should not place the Bill and the finance of the country at the mercy of the House of Lords, and there are special reasons also why we should make such arrangements as will prevent any unnecessary waste of the time of the House. My right hon. Friend says that the House ought to be able to deal with each of the items contained in the Bill individually and separately. Well, so we can. Hon. Members who disapprove of the contents of any clause can move its rejection or propose some modification of it. No practical evil can arise from the manner in which this Bill has been put together, and I am glad to know that the plan which we have followed of combining in one Bill the whole financial arrangements of the year has the entire approval of my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian. That being so, I do hope that hon. Members will reject this Motion for an Instruction, which, if adopted, would imperil the financial supremacy of the House of Commons and lead to a great waste of public time.

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not know whether any Member on either side of the House remembered when the right hon. Gentleman was declaiming as to the motive at the bottom of this Instruction and dealing with what he considered to be the precedents, that he himself on a similar occasion, before he was as orthodox as he is with regard to the Sinking Fund, suspended the Sinking Fund and took the course of dealing with the National Debt in a separate Bill instead of combining it with the Budget. That was in 1886. I observe that the right hon. Gentleman spoke in an undertone when he said there were precedents the other way, and he was evidently too modest to speak on the precedent he had himself established. Is it not preposterous on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to say that this Motion is introduced for the purpose of enabling the House of Lords to obtain more power? Does the right hon. Gentleman really think it? If so, did he think it when he took the course I have mentioned—in 1886? It has been invariably the custom, without a single exception, since 1787, that when the Sinking Fund or the National Debt has been dealt with it has been dealt with in a separate Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) approves of bringing the whole finance of the year into one Bill, but the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) sanctioned the principle of the Sinking Fund being dealt with separately in 1885 (in the time of Mr. Childers), and he again sanctioned that course in 1886, when the present Chancellor of the Exchequer set the example of suspending Sinking Funds. I do not believe the right hon. Gentleman was serious in those passages in which he referred to the House of Lords. In these later years of democratic government, whenever the right hon. Gentleman can find an opportunity of flaunting the red flag of the House of Lords before his

Party he never misses it, and so wrapped up is the right hon. Gentleman in his favourite pursuit that he abandons that function he performs with much greater ability and dignity—namely, that of a Constitutional lawyer. I think that anyone who has studied the Constitutional precedents with regard to the National Debt would, not on account of the House of Lords but on account of the privileges of the House of Commons, have taken the course taken by the right hon. Member for Midlothian during the whole of his career. The right hon. Gentleman quoted precedents, and how well they must have sounded to his own friends and to anyone not acquainted with the other side! In the celebrated case of 1787 no allusion was made in the Debates to the comparatively small point of interest on Annuities being devoted to the reduction of the National Debt. I have read carefully much of what has been written on the subject. The point is that Lord Palmerston, Mr. Disraeli, Lord Carlisle, and all the other authorities the right hon. Gentleman has quoted as speaking of bringing the whole finance of the year into one Bill were simply dealing with taxes or the repeal of taxes upon the people, and there was no question whatever of dealing with the National Debt. I think, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman was scarcely candid in endeavouring to induce the House to believe that this was covered by the phrase "the whole financial business of the year." The context shows distinctly that it was a question of taxation or the repeal of taxation or matters connected with Inland Revenue, and that the National Debt was not in the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of those days, and I challenge any colleague of the right hon. Gentleman to find in the Debates any sanction for the course now pursued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in dealing with the National Debt in a Customs and Inland Revenue Bill. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to produce any precedent since 1787. There is no other precedent. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the case in which Sir Stafford Northcote amalgamated his taxation Bills in one measure. In that case, however, a dissolution had been announced a few days previously, and it was thought desirable to make as much progress as possible. On hurried action under such circumstances as those the right hon. Gentleman wishes to build a precedent. I must warn the House against being misled by the phrase, "The whole financial arrangements of the year." Is that which he introduces into this Bill—this repeal of the financial parts of the Imperial Defence Act and the Naval Defence Act—part of the finance of the year? Is it part of the financial arrangements of the year? No. In this Bill the right hon. Gentleman repeals the financial arrangements of these two important Bills, and for that he ought to find a precedent. The right hon. Gentleman treats the matter in the lightest possible way, and jokes—because he cannot, I am sure, have meant it seriously—about our making this Motion in the interest of the House of Lords. But is there not a serious side to the precedent the right hon. Gentleman is setting? Hitherto dealings with the National Debt have been considered sufficiently important to be dealt with in separate measures. I say that the House of Commons have a right, and hon. Members opposite will in future wish, I am sure, to retain that right, to maintain the whole of their privileges with regard to action relating to the Sinking Fund and the National Debt. I put it to supporters of the Government whether, if they were in Opposition, they would be glad to see such questions hidden away in the very last clauses of a complicated Bill such as that before the House? The right hon. Gentleman says we have got the Second Reading. No, we have not got the Second Reading. But supposing we had, the right hon. Gentleman could not assume that we should have assented to this proposal, and we could only dissent from it by voting against the whole of the Budget, part of which we might have approved. This shows the difficulty that is occasioned by putting the two subjects into one Bill. What I wish to put very seriously to hon. Members is this: Are they going to depart from the precedents which have been followed with regard to the National Debt since 1787—by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, as much as by anyone else? As for the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman about the House of Lords getting their powers increased in consequence of the steps we are taking, such a notion never entered into the thoughts of the Opposition for a moment. We were bound to take the course we have taken, and I am sure that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been in our place he would have taken the same course. I have had to deal several times with the National Debt, but I never ventured to include it in a Budget Bill. Such a course would have been very convenient, but I am sure that the great constitutional lawyer who now leads the House would have seen in it a departure from constitutional precedent, and would have made quite as strong a speech as he has done this evening, but without introducing the spice of the House of Lords. In the interests of precedent and of preserving to the House of Commons full opportunity of dealing with measures affecting the National Debt and the Sinking Fund, I shall support the Motion of my right hon. Friend.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had used very strong language about the special merits of having the whole financial arrangements of one year in one Bill. But how had the right hon. Gentleman managed to scrape up his small balance of last year? He had done it by introducing a special Bill by which he was enabled to take a sum of £300,000 out of the Treasury Chest. The right hon. Gentleman allowed that Bill to run the gauntlet of the House of Lords. It came very badly from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to dilate with such virtue on his past history when last year he broke the very rules which he now laid down. There appeared to be something more at the bottom of the matter than the putting of the whole of the financial arrangements of the year into one Bill. He fully agreed that it was desirable to put the whole of the taxation of the year into one Bill. The present Bill, however, did a great deal more than provide for the finance of the year. He was by no means inclined to be entirely bound by precedent, but he thought that when precedent went back as far as it did in the present case it should receive some attention. The clauses concerning the Suez Canal, the Naval Defence Act, and the suspension of the Sinking Fund were in no way a necessary part of the Budget Bill. He himself most emphatically objected to the suspension of the Sinking Fund. Ever since 1886, when the right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) was in Opposition, there had been no stauncher opponent than he of any attack on the Sinking Fund, and he (Mr. Bartley) had always supported the right hon. Gentleman even in attacking the late Government for interfering with the Sinking Fund. There were a great many Members in the House who protested against any interference with the Sinking Fund. The right hon. Gentleman last year departed from the high principle which he now laid down. If it was necessary last year to have a special Bill to enable the right hon. Gentleman to appropriate £300,000, without which he would have absolutely had a deficiency in the last year's revenue, why should he assert that those Members who were arguing that there should be a separate Bill for touching the Sinking Fund were simply doing so because they wished the House of Lords to throw it out? That was an insinuation that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have made. It might sound very well on a platform at Derby or elsewhere, but it was not the remark of a statesman in any sense. Of course, it was desirable that all the taxation for the year should be included in one Bill; but this present Bill did a great deal more than provide for the finances of the year. The clause concerning the Suez Canal, the Naval Defence Act, and the Suspension of the Sinking Fund, were in no way taxation, or a necessary part of the Budget Bill. No doubt it would be possible to include anything in it by making reference to the clauses in the title; but the principle was thoroughly unsound. He trusted that, as the question involved was a constitutional one, the Committee would go to a Division on it. They ought to have some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to why he had changed his position, and why he did this year what last year he declared it would be wickedness to do. They had a right to think that there was something behind this Motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he and his friends should certainly resist the attempt to override the judgment of the House.

Mr. JACKSON (Leeds, N.): I think some answer should be made to the right hon. Gentleman, who, the House must feel, demolished entirely the only excuse the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer ventured to put forward for the course he has taken this Session. The precedents he cited show clearly enough that the course taken on this occasion is without precedent. The right hon. Gentleman has not only dealt with the taxes for the year, but, as my right hon. Friend has pointed out, he deals also with the National Debt in the same Bill. I venture to say that even the title of the Bill, which is

"to grant certain duties and customs and inland revenue, and to make other provision for the financial arrangements of the year,"

shows that it will make financial arrangements which have no reference to this year whatever. They will extend far beyond the present year. Among other things, what does the Bill do? It repeals three separate Acts of Parliament that were passed at three separate times in three separate Bills, and which have no reference whatever to the Customs and Inland Revenue Bill of the year. I remember the indignation of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer against my right hon. Friend when he proposed to deal with the Beer Duties, and I know how my right hon. Friend was forced to commit himself to a statement that the money was to be dealt with within the financial year in the Bill passed that Session. It was ruled against him that he could not hang up a certain sum of money it was proposed to set aside. The right hon. Gentleman will admit it was necessary to bring in a separate Bill to call in aid the balances of the Treasury Chest.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: It was not necessary.

**Mr. JACKSON**: Then the right hon. Gentleman took a very unnecessary course. We may at all events conclude that he thought it was desirable to bring in a separate Bill in order to avoid the raising of the question which is now being raised. I think the Government might have attempted to offer some defence for departing from all precedents since 1787. I think they have treated my right hon. Friend with scant courtesy in leaving without any reply whatever the very serious indictment he brought against the Government.

**Sir R. TEMPLE** (Surrey, Kingston) said, he wished to ask, as a private Member, if the Government would not give some explanation? It was obviously necessary that the control of the National Debt should be kept as a separate arrangement from the other Budget proposals of the Government. Strong arguments had been urged why that should be done, and yet no kind of reply had been offered by the Government. This conspiracy of silence could not answer. An explanation would have to be given by the Government either on this or on some other occasion.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: The point that has been raised is not a large or important one. I think everything that could be said has been said on both sides; and that is the only reason why there has been no reply to the speech referred to.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 121; Noes 161.—(Division List, No. 51.)

The following Instructions also stood on the Paper:—

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach,—On Order for Committee on Finance Bill being read, to move, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill altering the Composition Duty so that it shall be made to correspond with the Death Duties chargeable under the Bill upon property belonging to individuals.

Mr. Grant Lawson,—On Order for Committee on Finance Bill being read, to move, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert provisions in the Bill to enable existing settlements of property affected by the Bill to be modified.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: There are two more Instructions on the Paper, but they are not in Order, inasmuch as they are not covered by any Resolution adopted by the House in Committee of Ways and Means. The first raises a charge on property, and that can only be done by Resolution sanctioned in Committee of Ways and Means. The second, dealing with settlements, is not, I think, within the purview of the Bill, and it has not been covered by any previous Resolution sanctioned in Committee of Ways and Means.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

**Sir J. LUBBOCK** rose to move, in page 1, line 16, after "every," to insert,

"person who may receive any property real or personal from any."

THE CHAIRMAN said, this Amendment was out of Order. It would increase the existing Legacy Duty, and change the nature of it and the persons who paid it, and there had been no preliminary Resolution passed empowering the House to make what would be equivalent to an increase of Legacy Duty.

SIR J. LUBBOCK: Whether it would increase the Legacy Duty would surely depend upon a subsequent part of the clause to which we have not come as yet.

THE CHAIRMAN: The matter has been carefully considered, and that is the conclusion I have come to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I need hardly say that I do not desire to dispute your ruling, but it throws the whole discussion of the Bill into a form never contemplated by any gentleman on this side of the House, and makes it absolutely imperative that the Government should without further delay bring forward the terms of the Resolution which is required, as the Speaker has ruled, for Clause 15 of the Bill. I think I shall prove what I have to say on this point, and I hope the Government will take into account the special difficulties and circumstances in which we find themselves. Our view has been—and we expressed it upon the Second Reading of the Bill—and is, that the proper and equitable way of dealing with the question of the Death Duties is by making this portion of the charge fall upon the person who receives the money, and not to charge the duty upon the *corpus* of the person who had the money once, but who, being dead, has it no longer. We have always maintained and still contemplate bringing forward Amendments to carry out that principle. As I understand the ruling of the Chairman, it will be difficult, if not almost impossible, to raise this question by way of Amendment, and our sole resource in dealing with the situation will be to discuss and to divide against every clause in which the *corpus* of the property is dealt with; but that is not a very convenient way of proceeding, nor is it consistent with the dignity of the Committee. This is a most important point. The Government bring in their Bill without even a sufficient number of Resolutions to cover the Bill itself, and they announce their intention of completing the work of bringing in the necessary Resolutions at some late and at present undefined date. We want to know whether they will not bring in the Resolution at once, so that we may be able to draft our Amendment to cover this alteration of duty? The right hon. Gentleman will see that if we are precluded by the Rules of the House from converting his duty on the *corpus* of the property into a duty on the amount of the legacy received by the individual legatee we are practically reduced to a voting machine for one of the main principles involved in the Bill. We may vote against the Government, but we are incapable of amending their proposal. That is not consistent with the dignity of the Committee nor with the carrying on the business of the Committee in a business-like spirit. I quite feel, Sir, that you had no choice but to give the ruling you did upon the point; but how are we to get out of the difficulty we are thereby placed in? The only way is that we should have some opportunity of having a Resolution brought forward by the Government to enable us to raise this point. We can hardly ask them to do that; but at all events let them bring forward their own Resolutions, which they must bring forward, and which will enable us to discuss the Amendments down on the Paper on this very point. The right hon. Gentleman has not told us in what terms he means to move the subsequent Resolution, and I propose we should adjourn the further discussion of this matter until we know the terms of the Resolution of the Government and until we see whether we cannot move an Amendment to the Resolution which would enable us to deal with a subject which everybody in the Committee, whether he agrees with our view or not, must admit to be germane to the Bill, intimately bound up with the whole principle of the Bill, of a character which every Opposition has a right to discuss, and which, so far as we can see, not only have they a right to discuss, but to press on the Government as being the logical conclusion of their own theory of finance. That being so, feeling the position in which we have been placed by the unexpected ruling made from the Chair, and feeling the position is one which makes further discussion almost useless to-night, I beg now to move that you report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): On a question of Order, I wish to ask whether a Motion to report Progress can be made without any Question being before the Chair? In order that a Debate may be adjourned there must, I submit, be some Question before the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has concluded his statement by moving to report Progress, which is the Question now before the Chair.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Sir, any pretext to waste time seems to be sufficient for some hon. Members; but of all pretexts to waste time, in my opinion, the most mischievous is when the Leader of the Opposition, in order to attack the Chairman of Committees' ruling, moves to report Progress because he does not approve of it. The most injurious course to the conduct of the House of Commons is that which the right hon. Gentleman has just set the example of taking. What is the case? Every man acquainted with the Rules of the House must know that the proposal which has been ruled out of Order was obviously out of Order. The plan of the Bill is to charge the duty upon the *corpus* of the property, and all the Resolutions in Committee were founded upon that principle. Then the right hon. Gentleman comes forward with a totally different plan. It is not an Amendment to the plan of the Bill, but the rejection of that plan, and the substitution in the Bill of a totally different plan, having no relation to it, and being in contradiction to it; and the right hon. Gentleman pretends to be astonished that it was ruled out of Order. The A B C of Order in this House would show such a proposal to be out of Order, but because the ruling does not suit the book of the Leader of the Opposition he moves the adjournment of the House. I hope the country will note the way in which the right hon. Gentleman wishes the business of the House to be conducted. The Opposition have never dared to face this Budget fairly and frankly. They have never dared to oppose its principles or attack it, but they have endeavoured by a side wind and by every subterfuge to escape from it; but of all the methods of wasting the time of the House of Commons and of defying the authority of the Chair, I venture to denounce this as the worst instance with which I have ever been acquainted.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the art of Parliamentary debate consisted in imputing motives to opponents the right hon. Gentleman is one of the most distinguished Parliamentarians of our time. If bluster and misrepresentation are to be the methods adopted by the right hon. Gentleman in the conduct of this Bill through the House, I can only tell him that the task which must under any circumstances have been a difficult one will in his hands be almost impossible. The elementary duty, I will not say of a Member, but of a Leader of the House, is to show some slight courtesy to those who have not done anything of which he has a right to complain; and unless the right hon. Gentleman can approach this subject in a very different temper and spirit he will find himself confronted with a task which it will be difficult even for him to surmount. The right hon. Gentleman was good enough among the imputations which he contrived to compress into the brief space of five minutes to include the suggestion that I intended by the Motion that I made to make a covert attack upon the occupant of the Chair. Nothing was further from my intention. The ruling came upon me as a surprise, but I saw the great force of the argument by which the ruling was supported, and it never occurred to me to dispute it. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that we dare not meet his Budget by a direct attack. The right hon. Gentleman is extremely hard to please. We voted against the Second Reading, which the right hon. Gentleman carried by a majority of 14, and we mean to vote against a good many of the provisions in the Bill, and to meet him directly, because we think the proposal bad and unjust. All we are asking for is to be allowed that liberty of debate without which Committee of the House will become a farce. I, therefore, earnestly impress upon the House the propriety of letting the Opposition discuss a Resolution which will enable them to bring in Amendments which, after the ruling of the Chairman, we could not propose at the present stage. Otherwise our deliberations will be reduced to a farce, and we shall be turned into a mere voting machine—a machine not for altering or modifying the

Budget, but for saying whether we will take it as a whole or not. That is the function of the House on the Second Reading or the Third Reading; but it is not the function of the House in Committee. It is in order that the House may perform its proper function in Committee that I press the desirability of now adjourning and giving the Government time to do that which they ought to have done three weeks ago—namely, laying on the Table the Resolutions necessary to cover the provisions of their own Budget.

SIR J. LUBBOCK said, that unless the adjournment of the subject was now agreed to, so that the Government should have an opportunity of bringing in the Resolution which they admitted to be necessary, the Opposition would be precluded from discussing this most important part of the Bill The Opposition were placed in a most unfair position by this action on the part of the Government. And when the Chancellor of the Exchequer told him that in putting down this Amendment he must be ignorant of the A B C of Parliamentary procedure, he must tell the right hon. Gentleman that before putting down the Amendment he consulted the recognised authorities on Parliamentary procedure, who gave him to understand that it was in Order. That fact only showed what great difference of opinion there might be as to whether a Resolution was in Order or not. Under present circumstances they really could not discuss the Budget fairly, and he thought, therefore, that the Government were bound to adopt the course suggested by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, he regretted that any heat should have been introduced into the Debate. The matter in dispute was really for the convenience of the House. At any rate, it was a question whether the convenience which the Government proposed to take to themselves was to be extended to the Opposition. Early in the evening it became apparent that sooner or later the Government would have to adjourn the proceedings on the Bill in order that they might bring in a Resolution. That Resolution the Government was prepared to bring in at a time to suit their own convenience, but when it was suggested that the Resolution should be brought in at a time to suit the Opposition as well as the Government it was said the proposal was of the most revolutionary character, and should be met only with denunciations. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University had said that before he put his Amendment on the Paper he had consulted a high Parliamentary authority——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is not the matter before the Committee. The hon. Member must not advance reasons why the Amendment was put down.

MR. GRANT LAWSON said, he had no desire to oppose the authority of the Chair, but he thought he was entitled to show some reasons why Progress should be reported, for the purpose of making in Order, on some future occasion, the Amendment which by the ruling of the Chairman was now out of Order. He submitted that it would not defeat the whole scheme of the Bill if the Motion were accepted and the matter considered on a subsequent occasion. From the way the measure was introduced it was obvious that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not intend to shut out Amendments of that nature, and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not desire to avail himself of a technicality in order to avoid discussion upon a matter of such great importance. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced the Bill he said its object was to impose taxation according to the ability to bear it. All the Opposition desired was a fair opportunity to show how the burden of taxation might be placed on the right shoulders.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, he was sure the Chancellor of the Exchequer would admit that the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University was desirous of moving was one for the discussion of which an opportunity should be given. But if the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was not taken no opportunity for the discussion of that Amendment would be available. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had complained of obstruction. The right hon. Gentleman could at once remove all obstruction—if there was obstruction—by undertaking that the subject of the Amendment should be discussed at some other time. He could not understand why the right hon. Gentleman should refuse to allow the Amendment to be discussed. It could not be that the proposal was indefensible. The question was whether a rate of duty should be established that would fall with crushing effect on a certain class of poor property owners——

MR. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.): I rise to Order, Mr. Chairman. I wish to know whether a discussion as to a rate of duty falling with crushing effect is in Order on this Motion?

THE CHAIRMAN: No; I do not think it is. I think the hon. Gentleman is going beyond the limits.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON said, the hon. Gentleman had not allowed him to finish the sentence. He contended that the Leader of the House had a responsibility thrown upon him to provide an opportunity for the discussion of what was admittedly a most important proposal, and it was desirable there should be an adjournment in order that such opportunity should be found. If the object of the Government was to avail themselves of the Forms of the House in order to force this Bill through without adequate discussion he could understand their action, but he could not understand that action if they had a *bonâ fide* desire that the principles embodied in the measure should receive a full and fair discussion.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have no desire to prolong this discussion. I am sorry that some hon. Members opposite should think that I spoke with too much heat, but I confess that I regard this Motion to adjourn the Debate at 9 o'clock on the first night of the discussion as being rather a strong measure for the right hon. Gentleman to have taken. The reason why I am unable to consent to the right hon. Gentleman's Motion is this: Supposing that some hon. Members opposite who object to the imposition of the duty upon spirits moved to report Progress in order to enable the Government to bring forward a Resolution imposing a duty upon tea, the Government would in that case, as we do now, have declined to accept such a Motion. We are asked to consent to the Motion for reporting Progress in order to enable us to introduce a Resolution which will overthrow our whole scheme. I feel that in the position I occupy I am responsible for this Bill, and for—what is of even more importance—the disposal of the time of the House. I am bound by the Rules of the House, as other hon. Members are, and I cannot allow these Rules to be departed from. The course which is proposed by the right hon. Gentleman is one which I must decline to take, and, therefore, I must oppose this Motion.

SIR R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that he also had no desire to introduce any heat into the discussion, but he trusted before this question was decided hon. Members would thoroughly understand the position in which the House was placed by the action of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the course taken by the Opposition was equivalent to asking the Government to report Progress in order that the latter should bring in a Resolution to impose a duty upon tea instead of upon spirits. There could not be a greater travesty of the proposal of the Opposition. This Bill proposed to abolish certain duties—namely, the Probate Duty, the Account Duty, and the Succession Duty which, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out, had hitherto been levied upon the capital value of certain property. The right hon. Gentleman now proposed in this Bill to increase the area of the description of property upon which the duty fell, and to bring within it realty as well as personalty. That being so, the right hon. Member for the University of London, who certainly was not given to obstruction, moved an Amendment upon the 1st clause of the Bill which would have raised the whole question whether this new tax should be levied upon the capital value of the property in the hands of the dead man or in those of the persons who received it, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that that could not be done. The question must be discussed at some stage or other of the Bill, and what was desired by the Opposition was that that discussion should not be precluded by decisions of the House on clauses coming before Clause 15. That clause involved a part only, and not the whole, of the question which it was desired to raise, and the consequence would be that when they came to Clause 15, and attempted to raise the question of the Succession Duty, all that they could do would be to raise it with regard to a limited portion only of the subject. What the Opposition desired was that a full and fair opportunity should be given them for discussing the question not upon the clause relating to Succession Duty, but on some clause which governed the whole principle. They were entitled to ask the Government not that some Resolution should be moved to put into the Bill something that was not in it, but that they should have a fair opportunity of challenging the Government on the question whether the new principle laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not a gross injustice, and whether it was not right and just that, to adopt his own words, the tax should be borne by the person who had the ability to pay it.

Mr. BYRNE (Essex, Walthamstow) said, he desired to say a few words on the present position in order to assist the Committee to come to a conclusion how to vote on the matter. The Bill now under discussion was a measure containing the whole financial scheme of the year. That being so, that whole financial scheme must be considered with reference to all its parts. If he had rightly understood the ruling of the Chair, it was that, as regarded one particular portion of the financial scheme, the Bill proposed that which was not justified by the Resolutions which had been passed. If that were the case—if it were one scheme, and a portion of it were not justified by the Resolutions which had been passed by the House, could they consider the scheme as a whole until another Resolution had been passed? Was it or was it not possible that by passing the first clause of the Bill they might be depriving themselves of the right of moving Amendments to the new Resolution? He was entitled, he thought, to ask for a ruling on this point, as upon the answer received would depend the justification of the Opposition in moving to report Progress.

The CHAIRMAN: It is utterly impossible for me to give an answer. How can I answer a question in regard to a Resolution I have never seen, or respecting an Amendment with the terms of which I am wholly unacquainted? When any practical question is raised on the point before the Chair, that will be the time for the Chair to give its decision.

Mr. BYRNE said, he would ask the Chairman's ruling as to whether, should the Committee pass the first clause of the Bill, it would be competent for hon. Members to move Amendments to the new Resolution in the same way as they could have moved them but for the passing of the clause?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot possibly answer—I must absolutely decline to answer any hypothetical questions.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington) said, he knew how differently things presented themselves to hon. Members, looking at questions from different sides of the House; and he was glad not only to make allowances for difference of view, but to put the case against himself so far as he could; and yet it did seem to him that they had got to a point in this discussion at which difficulties narrowed themselves to a plain issue. How did they stand? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight asked them if it was fair to shut out the discussion of whether the duty should be incident on the estate in the hands of the dead man or whether it should fall on the interest taken by the successor. Of course, it was fair that that should be raised, and no one on that (the Ministerial) side of the House would desire that it should be shut out. They had discussed the question already. ["No, no!"] Yes; the incidence of the new tax on the estate of the dead man was the very principle and essence of the Bill. They were not dealing with the duty which it was proposed should fall on the interest of the successor. That was before the House when the Bill was brought up for Second Reading and had already been discussed and decided, and he apprehended that that would rule out many of the points in connection with Amendments which might be raised. The Government proposed—to cure a technical defect—to bring in a Resolution to deal with an isolated portion of the Bill dealing with the quantum of the estate on which Succession Duty was to fall. That was consistent with what they had done on Second Reading, but it would not be consistent if by way of Amendment to the Resolution they were to branch out into a wholly new field of inquiry which was precluded by what they had done on the Second Reading. They had settled the principle which ruled out certain Amendments, and they would not go backwards. They would deal with real estate and Succession Duty as raised by Clause 15 taken by itself, but that was another and separate matter to which they had entered upon, and it could not now be raised, especially in the form of an Amendment which they were not at all anxious to accept.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, he should like to know when the House had come to a definite decision on that question?

Mr. HALDANE: On the Second Reading of the Bill. [Sir J. Lubbock: Oh!] If he was not mistaken the right hon. Gentleman had himself raised the point on the Second Reading. That being the state of affairs—having had the full opportunity for discussion that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight desired—it would be unfair to ask the Government to go back.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, the refusal of the Chairman to give a decision on the question put by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Byrne) and also the speech they had just heard went to show more than ever the absolute unfairness of the position the Government had taken up in this matter. The whole speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman had gone on the assumption that this matter had been discussed already. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had cut away that argument by saying, "All this is due to the ignorance of the Opposition. You ought to have known that it would be impossible for the Committee to discuss that matter at all." That argument as to ignorance came badly from the right hon. Gentleman, because his own ignorance had been so clearly demonstrated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn, who, though only a new Member, had succeeded in tripping up the right hon. Gentleman. If the right hon. Gentleman would deal with the ignorance of the Opposition in the same way that he claimed to have his own dealt with they would be satisfied. The right hon. Gentleman claimed the right to bring in a Resolution to do away with the ill effects of his own ignorance. The Opposition did not ask to have a new Resolution. All they asked was that the Resolution should be brought in at once, and that the ignorance of the Opposition should be remedied at the same time as that of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The course the right hon. Gentleman attributed to them was not entirely their own fault. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight had pointed out certain words in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer which misled him and possibly many other Members on the Opposition side of the House. Undoubtedly they had thought when the right hon. Gentleman had talked about "the burden of the duty falling on the persons interested" that he referred to the legatee as well as to the testator. Their ignorance, therefore, was largely the fault of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said that, after the ruling of the Chairman, they did not know where they were. He did not wish to question that ruling, but it had materially altered the situation. It was now a question of very great difficulty to know whether any of their Amendments were in Order or not. If there was one principle in the measure more objectionable than another it was that of aggregating together from every portion of the globe the *corpus* of a dead man's property and then charging an Estate Duty upon it instead of proceeding on the old principle. [*Cries of* "Order!"] The Chairman would call him to Order when he thought it right to do so. He did not believe that anyone thought that the bringing together of the whole of a dead man's legacies into one *corpus* and putting them forward for taxation was fair and practicable. If his right hon. Friend's Amendment were ruled out of Order, there were a large number of other Amendments which might also be ruled out of Order, though the Chairman said that he was not in a position to decide on them at once. There was, therefore, every reason in the world for an adjournment of the Debate. The hon. Member for East Lothian said that the question had been decided, but the decision to which he had referred had only been given by a majority of nine, made up of a surplus number of Irish Members. [*Cries of* "Order!"] The Whips did not cry "Order!" It would, under the circumstances, be absurd to go on further to-night without knowing whether Amendments would be in Order or not. They had been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this was a financial Bill to be taken as a whole—as the settlement for the financial year. Was it a settlement for the financial year? It was nothing of the sort. Either this Bill was to settle the finances of the country for ever or only for a year, in respect of Income Tax and Sinking Fund, as well as of Death Duties.

MR. BODKIN rose to Order, and asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was justified in pursuing this line of argument?

THE CHAIRMAN called on

MR. HENEAGE, who resumed. He said, that he was the last person in the world to be out of Order if he knew it. He had come down to the House without the slightest knowledge of what was about to take place, and he was anxious now to know where they were. He had a number of Amendments on the Paper——

The CHAIRMAN: When we come to those Amendments I shall have to give a ruling upon them. But the Question at present before the Committee is simply to report Progress.

MR. HENEAGE said, the object of the Motion to report Progress was to secure time for them to consider where they were and to enable the Government to remedy the bad drafting of their Bill. The Government were to blame for the delay. Having had six months in which to prepare the Budget they still brought in a Bill imperfectly drafted. The Opposition had a right to have an adjournment, because they did not know where they were. [*Laughter and interruption.*] He cordially supported the Amendment, because the Government were in such a mess that they had better adjourn the Debate and get on with some business which they more perfectly understood.

SIR W. HARCOURT: My right hon. Friend thinks it desirable that we should know where we are, and I personally am very anxious that we should. I hope the House will come to a decision now, whether we shall go home to bed or proceed with the business of the nation. Reasons have been given on the other side why we should report Progress, and the Government have given reasons on the other hand why we should not, and I trust that we may be now allowed to come to a decision on the point. As to bringing forward a Resolution dealing with the Succession Duties I would point out that the first 14 clauses of the Bill deal with the Estate Duty alone. The Succession Duty clauses are quite separate, and come in as a matter by themselves. It is quite true that there has been a miscarriage with reference to the Resolution on the Succession Duty, but there has been none with respect to the Estate Duty. Clause 1 refers to the Estate Duty, and nothing in the Resolution on the Succession Duty can give hon. Members any assistance in discussing the Estate Duty. I hope that, under the circumstances, the Committee will do one of two things—adjourn, or go on with the business of the country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In an almost empty House an hour and a-half ago the right hon. Gentleman and I had a somewhat vivacious passage of arms, which might have led to a stormy scene had there been more auditors present. Luckily, there were few auditors present. A more peaceful tone has descended since then over our Debate, and I do not mean anything I may say to disturb the more amicable relations that have been established between the two sides. But I cannot allow the Debate to come to a conclusion without laying before hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have not heard the beginning, the case on which the Opposition rest their request or demand for an adjournment of the Debate. The hon. and learned Member for East Lothian, in a speech of great fairness, told us that he quite agreed that a more important or relevant subject could hardly be raised in this Debate than the one which we desire to raise on the Amendment of the right hon. Member for the London University; but he contended that it is a subject which the House has already discussed and pronounced its decision upon on the Second Reading of the Bill. He said that it was the essence of the Bill that the duty should fall on the *corpus* of the property of the deceased, and not on the amount of the legacies, and that the Second Reading decided that. But my hon. Friend is a great metaphysician, and knows that metaphysicians quarrel a great deal as to what the essence of a thing consists of. If we are to follow the doctrine that the essence of a Bill is for ever determined by the Second Reading, a great change will come over all the proceedings which have hitherto governed the House. When the Government determine what is the essence of the Bill, does it lie in their mouths to say that the essence of the Bill is never to be raised in Committee, to be modified or divided upon? That is a doctrine which I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman will not support with serious argument. It would create an absolute novelty in procedure to which the House ought never to consent. Let us consider more particularly what that doctrine amounts to. We had three days in which to discuss the Second Reading of a Bill, the most complicated and controversial since the great days of financial reform of Sir Robert Peel. I do not think there has been anything like it since the Budget of the right hon. Member for Midlothian in 1863. We had at the stage of Second Reading three evenings for the discussion of the Beer Duties, the Spirit Duties, the whole question of graduation, the burdens upon land, local taxation, Income Tax exemption, and other subjects, for the discussion of each of which separately three whole days would not be too much. Yet, because on the Second Reading a speaker here and a speaker there used an argument on a certain point, the hon. and learned Member for East Lothian declares that the point has not only been discussed but decided, and that the Committee is to forego the usual privilege of debate.

*Mr. HALDANE was understood to say that the question raised by the right hon. Gentleman was hardly a metaphysical question. What he had said was based on the Chairman's ruling, given after the essence of the Bill had been ascertained.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: A Chairman's ruling would be very inconvenient in metaphysics, and the great advantage we have over philosophers is that we have our questions decided by those decisions. The Chairman felt himself bound by the technical Rules of the House to make that ruling. He was precluded by the Standing Orders from looking at the broad merits of the case. It was on the technical issue raised and not on the broad issue, as to what is the essence of the Bill, that the Chairman gave his ruling. The question for consideration now is by what means we can be enabled to discuss the subject, which, according to the Chairman's interpretation of our Rules, we are debarred from discussing at this moment. How is the opportunity to be gained? One way is for the Government to bring in their Resolution at a stage when Amendments raising the vital and important question which we wish to discuss can be moved.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The Resolution will not apply to the Estate Duties.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is unnecessary to say that the Resolution can be amended. I hope that when the Resolution appears it will be possible to find means of discussing the question. If we had the slightest idea that the question would be excluded from the consideration of the Committee we would have moved an Instruction for the purpose of bringing it forward. It is simply because we omitted to bring it forward as an Instruction, thinking, naturally, that we could debate it in Committee, that we are now precluded from dealing with it. I ask the Government therefore, as the guardians of the privileges of debate in the House, to help us in this matter. If the Government will promise to bring on their Resolution without delay the present controversy may be brought to an amicable conclusion. Not a single word has been heard from the Chair to the effect that it would be contrary to precedent or Order to bring forward the Resolution at once. We are placed in a position of unexampled embarrassment through no fault of our own, but by a technical conclusion drawn, no doubt correctly, from the Rules of the House, and in the circumstances I trust that the Government will show a spirit of conciliation.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, the Government were asked to bring in a Resolution not for the sake of the Opposition, but in order that the Government might carry their own Bill. The Opposition simply asked the Government to bring forward that Resolution as soon as possible, so that they might have an opportunity of putting down Amendments, and not have to wait until they came to Clause 15 to discuss this very important question.

*Sir F. S. POWELL said, the hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire suggested that because the House had read the Bill a second time therefore the Committee was bound to endorse every proposal in the Bill. That was quite a novel principle. He had often heard it stated in Debate on Second Reading that though Members did not approve of the whole Bill, though there were clauses in it to which they objected, yet there was enough in it meeting with their approval to enable them to consent to the Second Reading. It was a new principle, therefore, to say that when a Bill was read a second time Members were bound by every proposition in the Bill. Again, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that the first 14 clauses dealt with the Estate Duty only, and that Clause 15 raised a new and separate question. Clause 15, according to the ruling of the Speaker, was only a hypothetical and possible clause, only a clause which might in the fulness of time appear on the Bill—a clause in the eye of imagination and in the voice of prophecy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was the duty of the Government to make all the arrangements of the year in one Bill. But only part of the arrangements of the year was made in this Bill. Many years ago Mr. Disraeli spoke on the Budget of Sir Charles Wood, and ironically congratulated him with having liberally presented not one Budget but three. He could now compliment the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not on having given the House three Budgets, but on having parsimoniously given it half a Budget. The right hon. Gentleman had said he desired that the conduct of business should be according to the Rules of Parliament. He ventured to say that whether or not the Rules of Parliament enjoined, the spirit of Parliament, at least, did enjoin, that the whole scheme of the Government should be submitted. The Government ought to develop their whole policy, and whether it was submitted in one Bill or in many Bills was a question of detail. He would point out that by adjourning the Debate they would be able to deal at once with other business of an important character——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Baronet is not now in Order.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, he wished only to point out that by adjourning the Debate they might, for instance, read the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill a second time, and in that way they would spend their time in a far more profitable manner.

MR. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) rose to continue the Debate——

Mr. CHANNING rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 221; Noes 176.—(Division List, No. 52.)

Question put accordingly, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 195; Noes 239.—(Division List, No. 53.)

MR. HANBURY (Preston) moved, "That Clause 1 be postponed." He thought that it would have been a perfectly legitimate course for the Opposition, which had been treated with so much unfairness at the hands of the Government, if they had taken the course which an Opposition generally took in such circumstances—namely, to move the adjournment of the House. But they were anxious to proceed with business. The Opposition were giving the best proof of their intentions, because they were anxious, at any rate, to proceed with the first business possible for them to discuss, which would not be affected by the new Resolution which the right hon. Gentleman was going to move. Clause 2 could in no way be affected by the Resolution which the right hon. Gentleman intended to move. Hon. Members did not know the nature of that Resolution, and it seemed doubtful whether the right hon. Gentleman himself knew what it would be, and he maintained they were entitled to have it placed on the Table of the House before proceeding to the discussion of a clause which might be largely affected by it. The right hon. Gentleman had said it would be impossible for the House to discuss that Resolution, but that was not the ruling from the Chair, which he would rather take than the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the Resolution came before the House, if the Opposition found it could be framed in such a way as to meet the difficulties arising, they would move Amendments to shift the duty from the *corpus* to the legacy. As it was desirable to proceed with the discussion of clauses which would not be affected by the Resolution, he moved the postponement of Clause 1 in order to proceed with the Debate on Clause 2.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 be postponed."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

SIR W. HARCOURT: I certainly shall be no party to this waste of public time. The House of Commons is met to dispose of the financial business of the year, and such an example of treatment of a Budget Bill has never been seen before in this House. Whether gentlemen opposite think they are going to derive any advantage in the country from the conduct they have exhibited to-night is for them to determine. We are quite satisfied, and we will be no parties to assisting proceedings of this description.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** (Paddington, S.) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken in his usual style when he found by chance that he had got a majority behind him. This policy of blustering and bullying his opponents when he happened to have a majority—[" Order ! " " Question ! " *and* " Withdraw ! "] Hon. Members had better themselves keep Order, and he would not withdraw. He was going to say exactly what he thought was suited to the situation, and the more hon. Gentlemen interrupted him the more they would make him speak at length. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was not so proud or so inclined to tyrannise over his opponents on the night of the Second Reading of the Budget Bill, when this wonderful Budget could only command a majority of 14. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to think that his majority would never dwindle to 14, or even less, in Committee.

**Mr. SNAPE** (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) rose to Order. The Question before the Committee was the clause. He begged to ask whether the noble Lord was speaking to the clause ?

**Mr. HANBURY** said, the Question before the House was not the clause, but whether the clause should be postponed.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** said, as his hon. Friend had pointed out, the Question was whether the clause should be postponed. He must protest against these ignorant interruptions when hon. Members addressed themselves to the Question. He could not congratulate the hon. Member on his knowledge of Parliamentary Rules or on Parliamentary courtesy, in which he seemed equally deficient. He was alluding to the majority of 14, on which the right hon. Gentleman could not have asserted the power which he had exerted that night. But he proceeded to a far more serious charge against the right hon. Gentleman, which he would adhere to. There was an understanding, a *bonâ fide*, genuine understanding, that if the right hon. Gentleman were allowed to get the Second Reading of his Bill in a three nights' Debate, a Bill which ought to have taken at least 15 nights if the Opposition had chosen to discuss it at length—there was an understanding that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were allowed to get the Second Reading in three nights without a Division, every clause and every line of the Bill might be discussed when the House got into Committee. That was the broad and unqualified statement upon which the right hon. Gentleman got his Second Reading. He got it in that way. He held that, in so far as that understanding was believed to be genuine by the Opposition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been guilty of a breach of faith. He said that deliberately, and he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to deny it. He had watched the proceedings on the Budget Bill silently up to now, and he had watched the Chancellor of the Exchequer's actions, and he had listened to his speeches, no matter how inordinately long they might be, no matter how highly prepared they were. He had listened to all the uncomplimentary interruptions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But he also fully understood the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman got his Second Reading—by telling the House that they could discuss every line in every clause of the Bill in Committee, and he told the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if he thought that, against an Opposition which on certain occasions showed that they could when it were necessary muster very strongly, these manœuvres and this sharp practice were likely to assist him in carrying this Bill rapidly through Parliament, he was very much mistaken. It had been shown how little the right hon. Gentleman had been able to do up to now with a comparatively large majority, and the proceedings of the Government that night showed that the time for such tactics had passed. The Opposition knew their strength when they chose to exert it——[" Question ! "] That was the question—he was arguing on the postponement of the clause, and he said that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer were wise he would not continue proceedings of this kind. They could only lead to most bitter controversy and sow the seeds of much more opposition to every line of the Bill than would have been offered if he had met the Opposition in a proper manner.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that they would waste time if they went on with Clause 2 instead of Clause 1, but he had not told them how this time would be wasted. He saw no objection to proceeding with Clause 2. It was a common practice to take clauses in the order in which convenience suggested. The ruling out of the Amendment showed that Members of the Opposition had been under some misapprehension, and the Government had also laboured under a misconception, as was shown by the fact that Clause 15 of the Bill was not authorised by the Resolution. The Opposition only wanted to be put into a fair position, and not to have all their Amendments rejected. By the time that Clause 15 was reached the Government would have got their Resolution, and the Amendments of the Opposition would be fruitless. It was idle to talk about a waste of time by the substitution of one clause for another in order to facilitate discussion. There was no reason why they should not make progress with Clause 2, or even with Clause 3. At all events, the responsibility for the waste of time did not lie with the Opposition, but with the Government.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Let us see what it is that the Committee is being asked to do. We are asked to postpone Clause 1 and to go on with Clause 2. What is Clause 2? It is a definition of the words in Clause 1. I hope the House and the country will understand what is the real meaning of the Motion. It would be absolute nonsense to proceed with the second clause. [MR. AMBROSE: Take Clause 3.] The House sees the position in which it is placed. I hope we shall take a Division at once, in order that we may ascertain who are the hon. Gentlemen that will support a proposition of this description.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, no one is suggesting that it would be a wise course to take Clause 2. What we have to consider is, which is the less convenient course to pursue? What we want to do for the moment is to discuss some clause under which no controversial matter may arise. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has pointed out that Clause 2 presupposes Clause 1, and no doubt he is in the right; but inasmuch as he will not give us what we ask for, which is an immediate discussion of his Resolution, we have to propose a plan which, although it may be inconvenient, at all events will have the effect of giving the Government time to reconsider their position, and to see how they can afford to us the opportunity for discussion to which they do not deny we are entitled. I notice that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is always appealing to the country, but I notice also that his appeals to the country are always confined to the speeches which he makes in this House. If the country is competent, as I do not doubt it is, to understand the value of the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman, it is competent to understand also that the Opposition have no other desire than the perfectly legitimate one of discussing in a proper degree an Amendment which is perfectly relevant to this Bill, from which discussion they are precluded because of the obvious disposition of the Government to prevent any discussion taking place upon it. That the country thoroughly understands the issue we shall, I have no doubt, discover when the appeal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is of a more substantial character.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 222; Noes 258.—(Division List, No. 54.)

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he wished to move to amend the wording of the first part of the clause, which said that—

> "In the case of every person dying after the commencement of this part of the Act, there shall, save as hereinafter expressly provided, be levied and paid upon the principal value of all property, real or personal, settled or unsettled, passing on the death of such person, a duty called the Estate Duty," &c.

He proposed to insert, after "every," the words "succession to property arising upon the death of," so as to make it clear that the Bill imposed a "Succession" Duty instead of an "Estate" Duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that his object was to place the duty upon the dead man's property; but how could a dead man possess property? The duty was to be levied not upon the property of the dead man, but upon that which the living successor came into. It was, therefore, a misnomer to call the duty an "Estate" Duty, because, in fact, it was a "Succession," or if the word were preferred, an "Accession" or "Transmission" Duty. When they came to the subsequent clauses it would be found that every method that would hold water embodied in the Bill was a method of exactly the same kind as that for recovery of Succession Duties at present. But when the Government put before the Committee a Budget with two great principles of graduation and aggregation, and embodied them in a new tax, they should give it a proper name. This was a tax on the transmission of property from the dead man to the living man, and it was, therefore, proper that by such words as he had suggested the true nature of the tax should be marked, and that it should be affirmed to be a tax on the succession to property.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, after the word "every," to insert the words "succession to property arising upon the death of every."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir W. HARCOURT said, that he stated in his Budget speech the distinction between the two taxes. In the case of Legacy and Succession Duties they looked after the person who took the property, and the duty was taken before the successor took any money at all. The hon. Gentleman said that he had borrowed his idea on this matter from the Treasury. The Treasury had nothing to do with the matter at all. His knowledge had, in fact, been derived from gentlemen who knew more of this matter than the hon. Member for King's Lynn. [*Cries of* "What person?"] He would tell them what persons—the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, with whose concurrence this Bill had been drawn. Of course, the Government could not accept the Amendment, which would absolutely destroy the clause as it stood, and would substitute for it something entirely new.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have listened with considerable surprise to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which naturally divided itself into two unequal parts. In the latter and smaller part the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to deal with the merits of the Amendment, while in the early and larger part he attacked the Member for King's Lynn. Into the personal controversy I do not desire to enter. My hon. Friend has already given the Chancellor of the Exchequer one serious fall, and nobody would deprive the right hon. Gentleman of such small revenge as he has been able to take. Unless I misunderstand my hon. Friend's knowledge and experience, and power of debate, there will probably be other occasions on which to test the depth of his knowledge. Leaving that personal matter to be discussed at a later stage, I pass to the few sentences which the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought were sufficient to dismiss this Amendment. It now appears that a properly drawn Amendment like that drawn by my hon. Friend can avoid the difficulties which the Chairman found in the earlier Amendment, and it is clear that we can discuss, and ought to discuss, the very important problems raised by the particular form in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has presented his measures. Those points cannot be set aside by telling the Committee that the Government have drawn their Bill on a different principle. The business of the Opposition is to reform the Government Bill. We do not desire to raise the subject of graduation, but, if graduation is just, it is just because it touches the property of those who enjoy it, and not that of those who have enjoyed it in the past, and are in no position to enjoy it, being, in fact, dead. That is a matter which cannot be put aside by the Chancellor of the Exchequer saying that he approves of one principle and not of the other. We have to discuss the question upon broad principles, and I put it to hon. Gentlemen whether they think that duty should be imposed on the amount of property which was enjoyed by the dead man or the property of his successors in the proportion in which they enjoy it? I cannot conceive a simpler question or a plainer issue, or one on which men who desire to do justice in matters of taxation can hesitate. The right hon. Gentleman will probably tell us that the existing Probate Duty is not levied on an equitable plan. There are two answers to that. The first is that in the existing system there is no graduation, and the second is that the existing Probate Duty is relatively small in amount. The injustice, therefore, as far as it goes, is relatively insignificant. But when you raise the amount of the duty, and in addition make it a graduated duty, every injustice and small inequality becomes magnified and transformed into immense importance. I hope that the Government will deal with this as a question to be argued seriously. I hope that we shall be able, if this question is not decided to-night, to raise it upon a later Amendment which even more fully carries out the object my hon. Friend has in view. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer is not prepared to debate the question in a serious spirit and to explain why he prefers the inequitable, unjust, and irrational method of taxation he proposes to an equitable, just, and a rational method, how can he expect us to discuss this Bill? To simply tell us that the Government have framed their Bill on a different plan to that which we support is not to treat this Committee with respect. I can assure the Chancellor of the Exchequer most sincerely that if he will argue the points we raise in a fair spirit he will find no desire whatever on our part unduly to prolong discussion. I appeal, however, to every man who is listening to me whether, in the first place, this is not an important question, and whether, in the second place, it is not a question which has never yet been argued by the Government? I do not recollect that the right hon. Gentleman gave us a single argument on this point in the two elaborate speeches he made on the earlier stages of the Bill, and I am quite certain that he has not yet condescended to give us a single shred of reasoning in Committee. I hope he will feel that something more is necessary. It is rather late for a discussion of the kind to-night; but if the question be not argued to-night it can be argued on some future occasion. I hope he will give us either now or then that full and fair explanation of the views of the Government, and the reason why he has adopted the plan proposed in the Bill, which will justify the Committee in proceeding to questions equally important but of a less far-reaching character which we are prepared to raise upon the first clause.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I hope that, in view of the altered tone which the Debate has taken since the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt), I may be allowed to say a few words upon a subject in which in past times I have taken a very great interest. This Amendment, which was introduced as an amicable attempt to improve slightly the phraseology of the Bill, has been transformed by the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer into an Amendment raising the important question of the character of the graduation to be provided by this Bill. I see by the morning papers that I was referred to last night by the most important Member of the Government as having been in past times an advocate of graduated duties, and even of graduated Death Duties, and it was made an accusation against me by the same distinguished personage that I had voted against this Budget Bill. Of course, in voting against the Budget Bill I was not voting necessarily against the principle of graduation, which is only one of about 30 different principles that are combined in this omnibus measure. The Prime Minister was good enough to recognise this fact, because he said that possibly my opposition to the Budget Bill, as a whole, was due to other causes than any change in my opinions in regard to graduation. But he proceeded to say that he supposed that my views had changed on the subject of graduation, because I had taken no part in the discussion in favour of the proposal. But why should I have taken part in a discussion of that kind when no one, as far as I know, has contested the principle on either side of the House? [*Cries of* "Oh!"] The Leader of the Opposition has certainly not contested it, and he is good enough for me. It is not necessary for my friends and myself to get up and raise this question unless, unfortunately, we should find ourselves in opposition to those with whom we are in constant alliance. As far as I know, there is no such opposition, and, therefore, there has been no need for me to interfere. If I had interfered, I know what would have been the result—the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have denounced me for talking against time and obstructing the Bill. But I think the time has now come when I may be allowed to explain my personal position in relation to this subject. I do hold that as a principle the principle of graduation is right, and I am very glad to see it so generally accepted in all parts of the House. On the other hand, the question of the details of any provision for carrying this principle into effect are matters for amicable discussion, and I was very sorry when, at an earlier period of the evening, the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed inclined to prevent any such discussion. I wish, however, to assure the right hon. Gentleman that I recognise in his more recent conduct ample compensation for his earlier course, for whilst for about three hours he endeavoured to prevent this discussion from coming on, he has now, in a speech of five minutes, introduced the whole subject to the consideration of the Committee. But, admitting that the principle of graduation is right, let us see upon what it is based. It is based upon the theory that those who are well-to-do should pay more towards the taxation of the country than those who are less fortunately situated. [*Cheers.*] That is the principle, but that is not the principle of the proposal in this Bill, for it may happen that under that proposal a man who receives £100, and has no other means whatsoever, will have to pay £18 for the privilege of receiving that legacy, simply because the man who has left it to him happened to be a millionaire. Was ever proposal more absurd than this one, under which the wrong person is being whipped? Hon. Members on this side of the House cheered me when I explained—and perhaps I have some justification for laying down first principles in this matter, since I was the first who advocated them publicly—that the right principle was that those who were rich should pay more than those who were poor. But exactly the opposite may result under the scheme of the Government. You may have a rich man paying less than a poor man simply because the former receives his money from a small estate. You may have a poor man paying £18 out of £100, and a rich man who receives £4,000 paying only 4 per cent. because the £4,000 represents the whole estate. I only accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer of having failed to see the consequences of his own proposal; but if he and his friends are going to appeal to the country on this subject, let me warn him that he will have to meet our arguments, and that we shall contend elsewhere, as I do here, that this is unfair to the poor. This is not a legitimate proposal based on the theory which I supported in 1885, and which I do not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer supported then. I hope I am not doing him an injustice, but I do not recollect any speech of his made in favour of what was then, I admit, called the doctrine of ransom, although it now has the sanction of very serious economical authorities. In any event, I say that the principle is not carried out by this Bill, and if the Prime Minister has an opportunity of speaking again—I have no doubt he will speak about me, because it appears that he cannot speak of anything else—I hope he will do me the justice to believe that, while I do not go back one jot or one iota from the principle I laid down in 1885, I think this Bill a most inadequate representation of that principle; and I am prepared to vote for every Amendment which will bring it more clearly into accord with that principle.

Mr. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, he felt bound to refer to one remark which had fallen from his right hon. Friend (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who had views on this subject with which he (Mr. Lowther) did not entirely agree. The right hon. Gentleman, at any rate, had shown the extreme absurdities to which the Government had been carried in their attempts to give effect to the views which to some extent his right hon. Friend shared. His right hon. Friend had said that the principle of graduated taxation had never been repudiated in the House.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I did not say it had never been repudiated in the House. I said I was not aware that it had been repudiated in the course of these Debates.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, his right hon. Friend was quite right, but he appeared to be under the impression that the principle of graduated taxation had been unanimously accepted by the present House of Commons. He (Mr. Lowther) could not be a party to any silence upon this subject, and he ventured to say that the great mass of the Conservative Party had always repudiated as utterly and radically unsound the monstrous doctrine of graduated taxation. That was his view, and he should be prepared to repeat it at any time in that House or on any platform in the country. He could quote in support of that view so high a Liberal authority as Mr. John Stuart Mill, and he could further raise the question whether any financier of eminence had ever supported the principle of graduated taxation. That principle was entirely rare in this country, and, as he had said, it was radically unsound. That being so, he should always protest against it. His right hon. Friend had pointed out that the proposal of the Government did not equitably carry out the principle which it professed to enforce. As he understood the proposal, a person in humble circumstances who received a legacy of a paltry £100 would be mulcted to the extent of 18 per cent.

Sir W. HARCOURT was understood to deny that this was the case.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, if that were not so he had certainly failed to understand the Bill, and he had not been alone in misunderstanding it. Certainly as he read Sub-section 3 of Clause 7 and Clause 12 that would be the result, because every legatee, be his legacy however infinitesimal, would have to pay his proportion of the Estate Duty. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was prepared to introduce words to remove this gross anomaly, he (Mr. Lowther) would very cheerfully acquiesce in such a proposal. As it was, the Bill was apparently to be forced upon the House without any adequate explanation, and Members were absolutely in ignorance of what the Bill meant.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to ask for the Chairman's ruling on a point of Order. He had regarded the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Gibson Bowles) as very harmless and as merely fixing the time at which the Estate Duty should be levied. Until he heard the two last sentences of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer it had never occurred to him that the Main Question could not be raised upon it. He had intended in a later portion of the clause to move an Amendment raising the whole question; and he wished to know whether, if the construction he had mentioned was put by the Chairman upon the harmless Amendment of his hon. Friend, his (Sir R. Webster's) Amendment would not be rendered out of Order?

The CHAIRMAN: It would be very unfortunate to discuss a question of this magnitude on an Amendment which is not intended to raise it, and I think we had better dispose of this Amendment as one which is incidental and which does not raise the Main Question. I would suggest that it would be more convenient that the present Amendment should be withdrawn so that the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) could be discussed.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, he declined to withdraw his Amendment. He had explained why he had introduced it, and he could not conceive any reason why it should be opposed. It raised a different question from that which his hon. and learned Friend (Sir R. Webster) desired to raise. It raised the question of the true name to be given to the new duty. The duty to be imposed by this Bill was a duty on succession to real and personal property, and consequently it was almost necessary that the proper term should be applied to it to show what it was. He should be prepared to argue that the term proposed by the Government was unjustified. They could not make their charge—their Estate Duty did not exist unless the exact condition of circumstances arose that constituted the succession to property, either real or personal. What he was doing by his Amendment was simply to put the dots upon the i's that had been left out by the Inland Revenue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told them he had acted upon the advice of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue. He knew those Commissioners, and he would like to make the Committee know something of them, having been a clerk in their service. On one occasion he met a very nice gentleman at a *table d'hôte*, and they made an acquaintance. After dinner this gentleman said, "I am a Commissioner of Inland Revenue; I have lots to get, and nothing to do," and he (Mr. Gibson Bowles) replied, "I am a junior clerk in your department and have lots to do, and nothing to get." He knew those gentlemen; but had the right hon. Gentleman consulted the Controller of Legacy and Succession Duties—did the Controller of Legacy and Succession Duties think this was a sound and remarkable Bill? No, he concluded the Controller did not; and he (Mr. Gibson Bowles) was quite certain that no one who had any experience of the extraordinary complexity of Legacy and Succession Duties who would think so. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] Of course, he was only replying to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and surely he might be allowed to do that. The right hon. Gentleman had taunted him with want of knowledge of this part of the matter, and he taunted the right hon. Gentleman with most complete and absolute ignorance of the whole subject. The right hon. Gentleman had confounded two subjects which it was absolutely necessary to keep distinct, and if he wanted money he had taken the right way to get none at all. Having replied to the innuendoes and the invective of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he came back to his Amendment, and he said that his Amendment imported the necessary word "succession" into this matter. He had considered the subject, and he thought it was necessary to have the word "succession" put in, and had it been possible he would have moved the introduction of the word into the title, but that, he understood, had been held to be out of Order. That the word should be introduced into the body of the Bill he was perfectly convinced, and although he would do much to oblige the Chancellor of the Exchequer he was not inclined to withdraw this Amendment, and he would not withdraw it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I now think, as the hour is late, that we might come to a Division and an agreement that would be satisfactory to all parties. I understand my hon. Friend attaches great importance to the Amendment, though he is clearly of opinion it does not touch the point raised by my hon. and learned Friend the late Attorney General. I understand that if it was not withdrawn but divided upon we should not be precluded from discussing the Amendment of my hon. and learned Friend. If you, Mr. Mellor, confirm that view which the author of the Amendment has himself given to us, we should be able to divide at once on the Amendment, and it would be open to us to discuss on Monday the Amendment of my hon. and learned Friend, which raises a point which all Parties in the House recognise as important, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has practically endorsed that suggestion. I, therefore, venture to say that we should dispose of this Amendment and get to bed in reasonable time, which would be a great advantage, and we should then be fresh for the important discussion which my hon. and learned Friend will initiate.

Mr. BARTLEY: I should like to know if that is so.

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! At an early stage of the Bill I called the attention of the Committee to the position in which the Chairman is placed by manuscript Amendments being brought to the Chairman at the last moment. This is one of the most difficult and technical Bills that could be considered, and yet I have brought to me at the last moment an Amendment which I am expected to construe and pass a decision to guide the Committee. I most respectfully protest against that system. In order to properly discharge the duty I owe to the Committee, I ought to have notice of any Amendment to be moved. The hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Gibson Bowles) brought this Amendment to me, and on reading it I came to the conclusion, as he did, that it was not intended to raise this important question. But I had so short a time to consider it that I might easily be wrong, and I think that in taking the view that he did the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be wrong for the same reason that he had no time really to construe it. Giving it the best consideration I can, I think that this Amendment does not raise the question referred to, and I think it may be divided upon at the present time with safety.

*Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, that in his opinion he would have been precluded from moving the Amendment by the inconvenience of interpolating it either before or after the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University (Sir J. Lubbock), and he would point out that it was not always possible to put down Amendments, for this reason—that they might have been forestalled by another Amendment which might subsequently disappear. He need not say that he and all hon. Members on that side of the House would do all they could to render the task of the Chairman less difficult.

The CHAIRMAN: I merely called attention to a practice which I have found extremely difficult.

Mr. BARTLEY: I should like to know whether it is an arrangement, after settling this Amendment, that we adjourn? [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Then I beg to move that you report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I move "That the Question be now put."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope we may be able to finish to-night, for everybody is agreed that we want to go to bed, and if, after the Division on this Amendment, we should adjourn——[*Cries of* "No!"] Do you wish to go on? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] Very well, if you want a row, I cannot help it.

SIR W. HARCOURT: We do not want any row.

MR. BARTLEY: I rise to Order. I wish to know if the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in speaking after he has moved the Closure. Let him withdraw the Closure.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman, before the Closure was moved, moved to report Progress, and I was about to put that Question.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes 186; Noes 217.—(Division List, No. 55.)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 181; Noes 212.—(Division List, No. 56.)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill in the House would not misinterpret his motive in rising to make a suggestion. The next Amendment was a very important one, and as a general rule it probably would not be found expedient during the necessarily prolonged discussions in this Bill very much to overpass the usual practice of this House in regard to adjourning at 12 o'clock merely as a matter of general convenience and regard for the health of Members of the House. The next Amendment was not one which could be disposed of very quickly, and he ventured to think that this was a stage at which it might be desirable to stop further discussion so far as the present sitting was concerned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*).

SIR W. HARCOURT said, that he had every desire to consult the health as well as the temper and time of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, and he had no wish to commence a contest which might exasperate the House. At the same time, he would point out, if the right hon. Gentleman meant that it was not desirable to continue discussion on future stages of the Bill after 12 o'clock, that this must depend on the sort of progress that was made. He wished to call attention to the fact that not one single Amendment standing upon the Paper had yet been disposed of. This was not the sort of progress they had a right to expect, but he would now consent to report Progress.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

## SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [21st May] reported.

### CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (ESTIMATES), 1894-5.

### CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £314,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Customs, Inland Revenue, Post Office, and Post Office Telegraph Buildings in Great Britain, including Furniture, Fuel, and sundry Miscellaneous Services."

*MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby), drew attention to the Liverpool Post Office, which, he said, seemed to be neglected year after year. No less a sum than £175,000 had been expended for purchasing land for a site which now for several years had remained actually bringing in no interest whatever to the public. In addition to that, an Estimate had been entered into to the tune of £180,000, and yet only the small sum of £10,000 had been expended for the last two years up to April last. The previous year the House voted £6,000 to be spent in the prosecution of the work, but this year the amount had fallen to £3,000. It was surprising that after such a large sum had been spent in purchasing a site, and a large expenditure of money contemplated for providing a new building, so very little should have been done. The Liverpool Post Office had been condemned as sanitarily unsuitable by the Medical Authorities, but yet this unsanitary state of affairs was allowed to continue, and it was time some more serious effort was made to meet the local wants. He thought, contrasting the Act of the Secretary to the Treasury towards Liverpool with his action towards other towns, the right hon. Gentleman would have some difficulty in justifying the course he had pursued. In Cardiff £53,000 was to be expended in rebuilding the post office, and of that estimated ultimate expenditure the Government were this year taking no less than £18,000. In Nottingham there was to be an expenditure on similar buildings of £40,600, and this year no less than £15,000 was to be spent. How was it these towns were thus advantaged and Liverpool left out in the cold? It was a singular fact that within the last 12 months the President of the Local Government Board had written to the Corporation of Liverpool urging that, having regard to the lack of employment in the district, they should do what they could to push on any local works which it was desirable should be executed. But here was an Imperial work which it was absolutely necessary in the interests of the health of the Post Office officials should be proceeded with, which would afford work for many artizans, and yet the Government wrote down to the Local Authority asking them to find work for the unemployed. This was a pressing case, and inasmuch as this vast expenditure of £175,000 in land was bringing in no return whatever to the public it was desirable that a commencement should be made at once, and that they should push on to completion this most necessary building at an expense sanctioned by the authorities.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said, that, as the hon. Member was aware, money was not very plentiful this year, and the comparative claims of localities had been examined with special closeness. There had been no favour extended to one place at the expense of another, but the claims of each locality had been considered on the merits. The case with regard to Liverpool stood thus:—The foundations were in and the quantities were now being considered. That was an operation that would take some time, but he thought he could assure the hon. Member that the work on the superstructure would be taken in hand almost immediately after Christmas and pushed forward vigorously.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromartie) complained of the disproportion of the expenditure in London and in Edinburgh and Scotland in various post and telegraph services, and urged that any surplus funds should be devoted to the work of telegraphic extension in the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that the complaint made with reference to the Liverpool Post Office applied to more than that particular office. Many similar post offices were reported to be in an unsanitary condition, and yet nothing was done until long after they were so reported. They had a Bill before the House at the present time requiring the owners of factories and workshops to find a definite space of air for the workmen employed in them, and the principle had been laid down that the Government ought to be model employers, but here they had the Government time after time employing persons in post offices under conditions entirely unsatisfactory. The excuse given was that there was very little money at their disposal; but that excuse would not be admitted in the case of a private employer, who would be at once compelled to comply with the provisions of the Act of Parliament.

Resolution agreed to.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £187,975, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £185,210, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Suvey of the United Kingdom, and for minor services connected therewith."

Resolutions agreed to.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.—(No. 194.)

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.—(No. 163.)

Reported with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 203.)

Reported with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) BILL.
(No. 191.)

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) BILL.
(No. 192.)

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) BILL.
(No. 193.)

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; to be read the third time To-morrow.

### BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL. (No. 157.) AND BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 3) BILL.—(No. 212.)

Reported from the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

Leave to the Committee to make a Special Report.

Special Report brought up, and read.

Building Societies (No. 2) Bill,—As amended in the Standing Committee, to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 246.]

Building Societies (No. 3) Bill,—re-reported, without Amendment.

Special Report and other Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 130.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 130.]

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow, at Two of the clock.

## MOTIONS.

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### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 3) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under "The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861," relating to Avoch, Burnmouth, Loch Efort, and Poole, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 244.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 16) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary districts of Middleton and Preston, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 245.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [SALARIES].

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the Salaries of Members and Officers of the Local Government Board appointed in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland, and for other purposes."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Resolution agreed to.

### PAROCHIAL ELECTORS (REGISTRATION ACCELERATION) [COST OF REVISING BARRISTERS].

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the cost of any additional number of Revising Barristers who may be required in the present year for the purpose of accelerating the Registration of Parochial Electors in England and Wales."—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution agreed to.

And, it being One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, 25th May 1894.*

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The House met at Two of the clock.

## *PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.*

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### RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (EASINGWOLD RAILWAY, &c.) BILL (*by Order*).—(No. 206.)

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) moved, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. He said, he hoped that some information would be given to the House by the replies of the Board of Trade with regard to the measure, and particularly whether it authorised the charging of the prohibitive rates on this railway which were charged on other railways. The Bill appeared to be a very innocent one in the guise in which it was presented to the House. Of course, if it were only a Bill affecting the Easingwold Railway, he did not suppose that he would have found occasion for interference, but as a matter of fact he found that the words "et cetera" indicated that the Bill applied to quite a number of railways in England, and Scotland, and Ireland. The House would remember that the Railway Rates and Charges Bill came into operation in 1893. Some of the charges were opposed by various Members of the House in 1892; but Parliament voted the revised rates in ignorance of what their effect would be, and there was a general increase of rates all through the country, to the very serious damage of the traders and agriculturists. Ever since that time efforts had been made with the intention of reducing the rates, and at length a Bill had been introduced into Parliament as the result of very much agitation which would prevent the continuance of such charges by railway monopolies as were injurious to trade. That Bill was now before the House. It proposed to do something for the relief of the classes to which he had referred. He did not know whether it would come to anything, or if it would be useful in any case. However, the Bill was intended to do good to the traders and agriculturists, and he must say that he was very much astonished that, at the moment it was before the House, the Board of Trade permitted another Bill to be brought forward which would confer upon half a dozen Railway Companies the very powers of making maximum charges to which so much objection was taken. He knew they would be told by the Board of Trade that the Companies had power to make these charges under the Act of 1891-92, but it appeared to him that in common decency they ought to ask that the particular Companies affected by this Bill should at least wait until they saw what was likely to become of the Public Bill promoted in that House. Surely no serious difficulty could arise from a delay of that kind. He was not going to labour this question. Probably the majority of hon. Members of that House had been asked by their constituents to do something with regard to this matter; and promises having been made that the traders and the agriculturalists should be relieved, he contended that the Government ought not to grant the Railway Companies any powers in excess of those which they possessed at present. They had a right to protest against the action of these monopolist railways; and in the interests of the public, and especially having regard to the fact that the Bill dealing with the public interests in the matter was to be brought before the House, he hoped that the House would reject the Motion.

MR. A. CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) seconded the Motion.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT, Morpeth) said, that notices had been issued to the traders affected inquiring whether they had any objections to this Bill, and no such objections had been received. He appreciated the efforts of his hon. Friend (Mr. Morton) in the protection of the interests of the traders and of the community at large, but he would point out to him, and assure him of the fact, that this Bill would reduce and not increase the powers of the Railway Companies in respect of their charges. He had no doubt that the opposition of his hon. Friend to the Bill would win the gratitude of the Railway Companies.

Dr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, the railways affected by this Bill were very small ones, and it would be extremely inconvenient and objectionable if these lines, which formed part of the large systems, were treated differently to the general system of railways. The reason why no traders had objected to this Bill was that the measure was one that was advantageous to them.

*Sir J. PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, the Easingwold Railway was owned and kept up by the landlords and agriculturists of the district, and the North Eastern Company afforded them every facility, but the tolls and charges were in the hands of the proprietors of the district. The railway was a very useful one that ought to be encouraged in every possible manner.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 147; Noes 12.—(Division List, No. 57.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### VENEZUELAN IMPORT DUTIES.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Her Majesty's Government are taking any steps to counteract the loss to British trade, as much at Home as in the Colony of Trinidad, caused by the 30 per cent. Import Duty levied by Venezuela upon British goods from the West Indian Antilles, and the consequent gain to Germany whose exports are exempt from such surtax ; and if he is aware that President Crespo has had absolutely in draft a Bill to abolish a custom differentiation as prejudicial to the Republic as to Great Britain, but has been prevented by German commercial influence at Caracas from bringing it before Congress ?

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) : An additional 30 per cent. on imports from the West Indies was imposed by Venezuela in 1881. In 1892 a Decree was issued abolishing the extra duties, but we have not heard that this Decree was ever confirmed by the Legislature, nor of any action on the part of Germany at Caracas with regard to it. Negotiations cannot be entered into till diplomatic relations are resumed.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT : Will the hon. Baronet take the opportunity to point out the effect of these extra duties on British goods ?

Sir E. GREY : The Venezuelan Government are fully aware of our views, but of course we can take no action until diplomatic relations have been resumed.

### IRISH POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that under the late Government the Local Government Board in Ireland frequently overruled the decisions of Nationalist Boards of Guardians, even when those decisions were within the law ; and whether he will direct the Local Government Board now to adopt the same course in dealing with the decision of the Edenderry Board of Guardians in the case of the labourer Macnamara ?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) : The Local Government Board inform me that it is not clear to them to what cases the hon. Gentleman refers in the first paragraph of the question. Regarding the action of the Edenderry Board of Guardians in the case of Macnamara, I pointed out, in replying to a previous question on this subject on the 10th instant, that the course adopted by the Guardians was contrary to the spirit and intention of the Labourers' Act, and that the Local Government Board would so acquaint the Guardians. The Board, however, have no controlling power in connection with the selection of tenants for cottages under these Acts. I understand that at a meeting of the Guardians to be held to-morrow the Guardians will reconsider their determination to give the cottage in this particular case to the labourer who is at present in occupation.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) inquired if the Local Government Board in Ireland had any rule which enabled them to distinguish in their treatment between Nationalist and other Boards of Guardians?

Mr. J. MORLEY replied in the negative.

## FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS.

Mr. A. CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, under "The Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893," every buyer of any parcel of fertilisers or feeding stuffs is entitled to have the parcel sampled and analysed under the provisions of that Act, and that quite irrespective of whether he be a farmer, a dealer, or a manufacturer, and at the rate of fees fixed under the Act by the public Local Authority?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I have no authority to decide any questions which may arise as to the interpretation of the Act in question; but I have no objection to say that I am advised that every *bonâ fide* buyer of a fertiliser or feeding stuff within the meaning of the Act is entitled, on payment of the fee sanctioned by the Local Authority, to have an analysis of the article under Section 5 of the Act, irrespective of any question of whether he be a farmer, manufacturer, or dealer.

## MINERAL OILS.

Mr. A. CROSS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the attention of his Department has been directed to the serious dangers to which the public are exposed from the public sale and use of burning oils of low flash point, sanctioned by the legal flash limit of 73° Fah., especially in view of the experience of temperature during last summer, during which the shade temperature record shows (between April and September) 60 days on which 73° Fah. and upwards was registered, 20 days on which temperature was from 80 to 90° Fah., and three days when it was from 90 to 103° Fah., in London?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.) (who replied) said: The question of the flash point of mineral oil is, as I have said before on more than one occasion, an extremely disputable one; and, while representations have been made on the one side in favour of raising the flash point, other authorities are strongly opposed to any alteration to the same, this flash point having been adopted, after very careful experimental inquiry, as the equivalent in the closed test of the former flash point in the open test. The matter is one which would, no doubt, occupy the attention of any Committee of Inquiry which may hereafter be appointed on the subject of petroleum legislation.

Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): When does the right hon. Gentleman propose to appoint the Committee on the Petroleum Acts which he promised us some time ago?

Mr. ASQUITH: I should be glad to appoint the Committee, but there has been some little difficulty in securing Members to serve on it and in deciding on the terms of Reference. The matter is, however, still having my careful consideration, and there shall be no avoidable delay.

## COMMONERS' RIGHTS.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government will bring in a Bill for the purpose of removing any doubts as to whether commoners, who, in right of their holdings, turn cattle and sheep on the common lands of a parish, come under the Ground Game Act of 1881, and so enable the commoners to protect themselves from the damage done by the rabbits which eat or pollute the grass growing thereon to the prejudice of their flocks and herds, and from any interference by the lord of the manor or his keepers?

Mr. ASQUITH: There are no "doubts" on the question. The Ground Game Act, 1880, expressly provides that—

> "A person shall not be deemed an occupier of land for the purposes of this Act by reason of his having a right of common over such lands."

The Home Office has not heard of any

cases of injury such as described by my hon. Friend's question. It is not a matter in which the Government propose legislation.

### THE MISSING "HAVOCK" PLANS.

**Mr. WEBSTER** (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the plans of the *Havock*, which were stolen from Messrs. Yarrow and Co., have found their way into the Naval Intelligence Department of the United States?

**The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY** (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Admiralty have no information on this subject.

### ROYAL MARINE TRANSPORT SERVICE.

**Mr. WEBSTER**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the transport service of the Royal Marines is so weak that a battalion of Marines, recently despatched from Portsmouth to Aldershot, had to requisition the Army Service Corps for horses and waggons, and even men; and whether, as in the event of war the Royal Marines are usually called on to furnish at least one battalion, he will take steps to provide an efficient transport service for that force?

**Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: The object for which the Royal Marines are maintained is service afloat. It is not considered desirable, therefore, to provide them with regimental transport similar to that of regiments of the Line. I am, however, informed that such a regiment, in marching from Portsmouth to Aldershot, would have to requisition transport in the same way as is necessary in the case of a battalion of Marines.

### "INDULGENCE" PASSAGES FROM INDIA.

**Mr. WEBSTER**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as it has been the custom for officers proceeding from India or returning to their duties to occasionally be granted (when there was room) transport accommodation on one of Her Majesty's troopships, and as that service is about to be abolished, the Government, in making contracts for the transmission of troops to and from India by private firms, will take into consideration the advisability of making arrangements by which officers shall not (when space permits) be deprived of the privilege of obtaining passages on the ships to convey the troops which they have hitherto enjoyed?

*__The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR__ (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Stirling, &c.): Indulgence passages will be granted when there is room in the transports taken up for the Indian Trooping Service of 1894-5 on the same conditions as in the past.

### TRAINING SHIPS ON THE IRISH COAST.

**Mr. ROSS** (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty has his attention been called to a Memorial presented to the First Lord of the Admiralty by the Londonderry Chamber of Commerce praying for the establishment of a training ship in Lough Foyle, and pointing out the exceptional advantages likely to accrue from compliance with the prayer of the Memorial; and does he propose to take any steps in relation to the matter?

**Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: The Memorial was received by the First Lord, and an answer was sent that the matter would receive the attention of the Admiralty in the event of an increase in the number of training ships being ever contemplated.

**Captain DONELAN** (Cork, E.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in the event of a training ship being sent to Ireland, he does not consider Queenstown has stronger claims than any other part of Ireland?

**Mr. ROSS**: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware there is much more material for Admiralty purposes in Donegal and Londonderry than in any other part of Ireland?

*__Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH__: These are hypothetical questions which I cannot answer. If an additional training ship were added, the claims put forward would be carefully considered.

### ALLEGED INTIMIDATION IN IRELAND.

**Mr. MACARTNEY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the language of Mr. John M'Inerney, chairman of a meeting organised for the purpose of condemning Mr. Thomas Donnellan, calling on the people to boycott Mr. Donnellan, reported in *The Limerick Leader*, 7th May, and to a resolution passed to the same effect; and whether the Government propose to take any steps in the matter?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: My attention has been drawn to a newspaper report of the proceedings at the meeting referred to. It was originally contemplated to hold the meeting beside the farm now occupied by Mr. Donnellan; but the promoters having been informed that no meeting would be allowed there, it was held at a distance of two miles away in another county. There is no legal evidence of the speeches made at the meeting, and, apart from this, I am informed that there was no local sympathy whatever with the promoters of the meeting, and that it is not anticipated it will have any injurious effect upon Mr. Donnellan, who still retains the farm.

**Mr. ROSS**: Was the meeting lawful or unlawful?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: If it had been held at the place originally chosen it would have been unlawful; but it was not held there. I may add that, in the opinion of those who are responsible for order in Ireland, much more harm than good is done to the persons concerned by calling attention to these cases, though, of course, when harm has been done, I perfectly agree that every Member of the House would be within his right to call attention to it. The proposition I submit is that, where no harm is done to anyone, it is better to leave the matter alone.

**Mr. MACARTNEY**: Can the right hon. Gentleman cite any instance in which injury has been inflicted by questions of this nature?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I cannot, but I have an opinion which is confirmed by experience and rational expectation alike.

**Mr. ROSS** asked how the question of locality affected the legality of a meeting?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I should think that the argument is pretty clear. If it was held in a certain place it might probably lead to violence, and would be illegal, whereas if held at a considerable distance there is less danger.

In reply to a further observation by Mr. Ross,

**Mr. J. MORLEY** said, he should prefer to act on the advice of his legal advisers than upon that of the hon. Member.

## SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

**Mr. CROMBIE** (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Government expects to introduce any legislation dealing with the question of secondary education in Scotland during the present Session; and whether, failing such, he will move that an Address be addressed to Her Gracious Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission on Secondary Education in Scotland?

**The SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND** (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The County Committees appointed last year have already done much work, and are gaining additional experience by the operation of their schemes. I do not think it would be well at present to do anything to interfere with the work upon which they are engaged.

## CORDITE AND THE MAXIM GUN.

**Mr. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state the result of the experiments made at Aldershot and elsewhere since the 4th of September, 1893, with the view of ascertaining how many ·303 cordite powder cartridges with nickel-covered bullets can be fired from the Maxim gun before the barrel becomes unfit for accurate shooting?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: No experiments have been made with the barrels of the Service Maxim gun, but at recent experiments at Hythe two experimental barrels fired 10,000 rounds each of cordite ammunition with nickel-covered bullets. At the termination of the trial the accuracy was as good as when the barrels were new, and each barrel was reported to be fit to fire several thousand rounds more.

**Mr. WEIR**: The Report issued last year stated that experiments were being carried out at Aldershot. Were they carried out?

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: No, Sir; my information is that no such experiments have been made with the barrel of the Service gun. Only experimental barrels were used.

## SCOTCH RETURNING OFFICERS' TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether Returning Officers in Scotland are entitled to charge 1s. per mile for travelling expenses of Presiding Officers in cases where these officers travel by rail at a cost of 3d. per mile first-class fare?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: By the Returning Officers (Scotland) Act, 1891, Section 3 and Schedule, a Returning Officer may make a maximum charge of 1s. per mile for travelling expenses of Presiding Officers within the Sheriffdom, but it is provided that the charges are in no case to exceed the sums actually paid or payable. When 3d. per mile only, therefore, has been paid, it would seem illegal to allow any further charge.

## FREE BOOKS IN THE LESMAHAGOW SCHOOL.

MR. JACKS (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if his attention has been called to the report of a meeting of the Lesmahagow School Board, held in the Jubilee Hall, Lesmahagow, on the 3rd instant, at which the Chairman is reported to have said that for the present year £123 13s. 1d. had been paid for the providing of books to save the reduction of the grant; if he is aware that it is currently denied that any scholars receive books free of charge at that school; and if he will say who received the books to the value stated?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: The circumstances to which the hon. Member refers have not been brought before the Department, and I have no means of knowing the special application of the amount named as spent upon books. There are 11 schools under the management of the Lesmahagow School Board, and it is not stated to which of the schools the question refers. Perhaps my hon. Friend will provide me with particulars.

## THE CURRENCY OF BRITISH HONDURAS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state the cause of the continuous delay in giving effect to the decision of Her Majesty's Government granting a gold standard of currency to the Colony of British Honduras; and, having regard to the fact that the trade of the colony is represented as being paralysed and the public finances in a deplorable state through the want of a stable currency, whether the necessary arrangements will now be pushed forward so as to bring the gold standard into operation at the earliest possible date?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The measures required for effecting a complete change of the currency of a colony involve many important questions which can only be decided after careful and deliberate consideration necessarily entailing delay. The Secretary of State is aware of the anxiety of the colonists of British Honduras for the introduction of the gold standard, and he will do all in his power to expedite the matter.

## HORWICH NATIONAL SCHOOL.

MR. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the assistant mistress of the Horwich National School recently received notice from the head mistress that she must immediately leave her lodgings or lose her situation, because upon her own admission she was lodging with a Unitarian, the head mistress stating that she was or would be supported by the vicar in the matter; and whether the Department will take action to reverse this requirement and to prevent its recurrence?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The Department have no information as to the alleged occurrence. The responsibility with regard to appointment and dismissal of teachers rests, of course, with the managers of a school and not with the head teacher. If the managers of a school act in the manner described, the Department have at present no power to interfere. I am considering the question of bringing in a Bill at the first favourable opportunity, with the view of giving a reasonable degree of security of tenure to teachers, but I am not sure whether it would cover a case of this sort.

### REGISTRY OF DEEDS (IRELAND) STAFF.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the salaries received by the Second Class of the old staff of the Registry of Deeds (Ireland) are, owing to the classification in force at the time of their appointment, less, service for service, than those enjoyed by members of any other equally important Department under the control of the Treasury, some improvement, personal to its existing members, might be made in the position of the Second Class, without permanently or materially increasing the Departmental Estimate?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The duties of these clerks are duties proper to the Second Division, and will hereafter be performed by clerks of that Division. The scale of the Second Class is better than that of the Second Division, and, service for service, their salaries are higher. I cannot, therefore, admit the assumption on which this question rests, nor can I undertake to improve the position of existing members of the Second Class.

### CURRAGH CAMP.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the building operations on the Curragh Camp are to be still further delayed; whether, in view of the want of employment in the locality, he would insist on the progress of the works, as previously promised by his Department; and whether the War Office intend to use Killaloe slates in Irish buildings?

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Preparations for a further contract for works at the Curragh are being made; but as the contract will be a very large one, the necessary plans and other documents will not be completed for some time to come. As regards the use of Killaloe slates, I have nothing to add to my answer to the hon. Member for North Tipperary on the 26th ultimo.

MR. FIELD: When is it probable that the work will be commenced?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say; the specifications are now being prepared.

MR. FIELD: Will the right hon. Gentleman press the work on?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I will do all I can.

### COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN DUBLIN.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any Code of Regulations for carrying into effect the compulsory clauses of the Education Act of 1892 in the City of Dublin has been approved of by the Commissioners of National Education, or whether any such Code has yet been submitted by the Corporation of Dublin to the Commissioners of National Education, or by the Commissioners to the Corporation; and, if so, when?

MR. J. MORLEY: I called for a Report on this question yesterday, but have not yet received it, and must ask the hon. Gentleman, therefore, to defer the question until Monday next.

### THE EVICTED TENANTS' BILL.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can insert a clause in the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Bill to meet such cases as that of John Mackey, of Penrath, Waterford, as otherwise it might possibly be held by the arbitrators that it was not an eviction within the ordinary acceptation of the term "evicted tenant," inasmuch as it was a question of disputed title and not for non-payment of rent the eviction was effected?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think the proper answer to this question is that it is impossible to consider detailed cases merely referred to by the name of the person, and then to ask me whether I consider such cases come within the purview of the Bill, and if they do not, whether I will alter the Bill so as to bring them within it. I do not think I can undertake to deal with the Bill in that spirit or from that point of view.

### SURVEYORS' STATIONARY CLERKS.

MR. WASON (Ayrshire, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General why, when the new establishment of surveyor's stationary clerks was created in August last, and three classes of stationary clerks appointed for England and Wales—namely, head stationary clerks, assistant head stationary clerks, and stationary clerks, no assistant head stationary clerks were appointed for either Scotland or Ireland; and whether he will take steps to place all these clerks, both in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, on a footing of equality?

**MR. A. MORLEY**: In Scotland and Ireland the amount of work devolving on the surveyor's stationary offices is much less than it is in England and Wales, and the stationary staff is correspondingly less. It is not considered necessary that in either Scotland or Ireland there should be, as in England and Wales, an assistant head stationary clerk.

### MOUNT WISE BATHING PLACE, DEVONPORT.

**MR. KEARLEY** (Devonport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the work necessary to prevent the pollution of the public bathing place at Mount Wise, Devonport, is not yet in hand; and whether he can state when it will be commenced, and also the length of time required for its completion?

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: The contract for this work has been accepted, and orders have been given for its immediate commencement. It is hoped that the service will be completed within six weeks.

### THE CHARGES AGAINST DR. PENTLAND.

**MR. DANE** (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the result of the promised inquiry into the charges made against Dr. Pentland respecting the conduct of his duties as dispensary medical officer at Dromod, Leitrim?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: The Local Government Board inform me that their Medical Inspector visited Dromod on the 9th instant, and after careful inquiry satisfied himself that Dr. Pentland has a residence there which he has regularly occupied since June, 1893, and that such residence is within the dispensary district for which he acts as medical officer. The cases to which my attention was drawn on the 1st instant have been inquired into, and it has been found that no inconvenience was caused to the patient in either case, and that no blame attaches to the medical officer who was temporarily absent from home when called. In the case of John Farrell he is stated to have been a paying patient, and had no dispensary ticket.

### EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOL CODE.

**SIR C. CAMERON** (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to the additional subject—

> "The services rendered by retail shopkeepers, merchants, manufacturers, and other persons engaged in distribution and protection,"

which has been introduced into the newly issued English Code for Evening Continuation Schools, page 17, to meet objections raised by traders as to the exclusive reference to the work of Co-operative Societies in the Code of last year; and whether he will meet the same objections raised by Scottish traders, on similar grounds, to the new Scotch Code, by inserting in it the same addition?

**SIR G. TREVELYAN**: The Evening School Code for Scotland does not now include the detailed schemes which were published last year as specimens. School managers may submit their own schemes, and it is open to them to include the additional subjects referred to in the hon. Member's question; and the Department will be ready to sanction it.

### IMPORTS OF FOREIGN BOTTLES.

**MR. MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the steamship *Cordelia*, owned by Messrs. Kilner and Sons, of Portmadoc, has recently arrived in the Thames from Hamburg, and is now discharging into barges at Kings Stairs, Rotherhithe, several tons of bottles made by Lewn and Newmann of Hamburg, consigned to R. White, London; and that these bottles have no name or mark upon them indicating their foreign origin; and what steps do the Government propose taking to put a stop to this breach of the law?

**MR. BURT** (who replied) said: The Board of Trade are informed by the Commissioners of Customs that the bottles imported in the *Cordelia* did not bear marks coming within the operation of the Merchandise Marks Act. There has, therefore, been no breach of the law.

**MR. MACDONA**: I ought to have mentioned in the question that the name "R. White" is stamped on the bottles in addition to the words "one farthing deposit charged."

**MR. BURT** said, that he understood it would only be illegal to represent that the articles had been manufactured in England. If the hon. Member desired further information he could put another question on a future day.

**COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT**: Will the hon. Gentleman inquire into the importation of these foreign bottles and the subsequent stamping of English words on them, conveying by implication that the bottles have been manufactured in England?

**MR. BURT**: That point is being inquired into.

### UNEXPENDED BALANCES.

**MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN** (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, if the whole of any sum voted by this House is not expended upon the particular object for which it was voted, there is any way in which the expenditure of the balance can be traced; and, if so, whether such a balance accrued in respect of money voted for works at Sheerness in 1892-3; and what has become of that balance?

**SIR J. T. HIBBERT**: The method of dealing with a balance of the kind referred to can be seen by study of the Appropriation Account for the year, always provided that the item is sufficiently important to be separately mentioned. The £3,000 voted for Sheerness under Sub-head 1 of Vote 10, Part 1 of Navy Estimates, 1892-93, appears as a postponed item on pages 86, 87, of the Navy Appropriation Account, 1892-93. It formed part of £58,497 gross saving on works authorised by Vote in 1892-93. Of this £58,497 a sum of £17,813 was, with Treasury approval, expended on other urgent works unprovided for in Estimates. The balance, £40,684, was part of the total sum surrendered to the Exchequer at the end of the year.

### RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

**SIR J. WHITEHEAD** (Leicester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can now definitely fix a day on which the Second Reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill will be taken?

**MR. BURT** (who replied) said: The Board of Trade are extremely anxious to make progress as rapidly as possible with the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, but I understand from my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House that the precise date for the Second Reading cannot be named.

**SIR J. WHITEHEAD**: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that there are thousands of accounts between traders and Railway Companies outstanding pending the settlement of this question?

**MR. BURT**: Yes.

**SIR J. WHITEHEAD**: I will repeat the question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Tuesday next.

**MR. A. C. MORTON**: Seeing that the Government are extending these objectionable powers—as evidenced by their action on a Private Bill to-day—is there any reason for proceeding with this Bill?

**MR. BURT**: I do not think I should answer a question which merely involves an expression of opinion.

**MR. A. C. MORTON**: Did not the hon. Gentleman to-day support a Bill increasing the rates?

**MR. SPEAKER**: Order, order!

### ANGLO-BELGIAN AGREEMENT.

**SIR C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the agreement with King Leopold, whether the strip leased to us between Tanganyika and the Albert Edward Nyanza has been explored; and whether the character and disposition of the tribes inhabiting or claiming it are known?

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The country has not been explored, but the object of this part of the Agreement was to reserve a right to a route and means of communication whenever it should be desirable to make use of them.

### AGRICULTURAL DISTRESS IN ESSEX.

**MAJOR RASCH** (Essex, S.E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Dorset, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, seeing that the map accompanying Mr. Hunter Pringle's Report to the Royal Commission on Agriculture is drawn from the Ordnance Survey maps, he will give instructions that the acreage of the area marked on that map in black may be ascertained; and whether he will endeavour to ascertain the extent of land, in addition to that marked in black, that has been thrown on the landlords' hands since 1879?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: The acreage of the area marked in black on the map to which the hon. Member refers is 28,222 acres and 28 poles, as will be seen by reference to the note on the subject at the foot of the map. I should be very glad if the information suggested in the second paragraph of the question were available, but I am very doubtful whether it would be possible to obtain it with any accuracy. The matter is one, however, which would naturally be considered by the Royal Commission, with whom, if necessary, I should be very happy to co-operate, in the event of its being found practicable to institute an inquiry.

### MAIL CONTRACTS.

**Mr. M. AUSTIN** (Limerick, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, I beg to ask the Postmaster General what steps, if any, have been taken in placing the contracts with the various Shipping Companies for the carriage of Her Majesty's mails to force the Fair Contract Clause, passed by the House of Commons, relating to Government contracts; and if he can state the names of the Companies with whom such contracts have been entered into, and the names of the vessels, also the rate of wages paid to sailors and firemen employed on board thereof?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: The Resolution referred to has not been considered, and I do not think can fairly be taken to apply to contracts in connection with the conveyance of mails with Steamship Companies, which, like Railway Companies, are primarily engaged in other large commercial operations. It is customary, however, to debar Mail Steamship Companies from sub-letting, and to stipulate that the ships should be properly equipped, manned, and officered. A Return of contracts with Shipping Companies is published every year in the Postmaster General's Annual Report.

**Mr. BODKIN** (Roscommon, S.): Then are we to understand that Shipping Companies are exempt from the operation of the Fair Contract Clause?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: Yes.

### WINDSOR FOREST.

**Mr. LABOUCHERE** (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether the £2 charged to each person to whom the privilege of keys to Windsor Forest are granted is paid into the Exchequer; to what sum the total amounts; and by whom this charge has been sanctioned?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT** (who replied) said: The granting of keys to the gates in the Windsor Great Park, and adjoining woods, rests with His Royal Highness the Ranger. If the privilege of a key is granted, a charge is made of £1 1s. per annum therefor. This charge was first made in 1888, and has the approval of the Commissioners of Woods and the Treasury. The total sum received in 1892-93 amounted to £383 3s., which is included as part of the income of the Land Revenues accounted for by the Commissioners of Woods in the Accounts rendered with their Report to Parliament for that year.

### POLO AT WINDSOR PARK.

**Mr. LABOUCHERE**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that leave has been refused by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to the Officers of the Horse Guards to play polo on about six acres of Windsor Park, which a few years since was put in good condition for the game at the expense of the entire regiment; and, in view of the great pleasure which the sight of this game gives to many inhabitants of the locality, and its healthful character, he will use his influence with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to allow it to be played on these six acres?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sorry that I am unable to relieve my hon. Friend's anxiety on this point, as the War Department has nothing whatever to do with it. Perhaps he will try how he may succeed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

**Mr. LABOUCHERE**: Perhaps the Secretary to the Treasury can reply?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: The giving or withholding of leave to play polo in the Windsor Great Park is a matter which rests with the Ranger, and not with the Commissioners of Woods. It is understood that, prior to 1889, polo was always played on a site known as the cavalry exercising ground; but in that year, in consequence of the Royal Agricultural Show being held on that ground, special permission was given to use another site known as the review ground. There is no desire to prohibit polo playing, but the cavalry exercising ground having been now restored, players are, it is believed, requested now to revert to the original ground, and in this request the Commissioner of Woods, who has been consulted, concurs.

### THE TREATMENT OF WILD ANIMALS.

**SIR D. MACFARLANE** (Argyll): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the decision of two of Her Majesty's Judges that lions kept in cages, not being domestic animals, are not protected against cruel treatment under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and whether, that being the law, it is in the power of anyone, for gain or otherwise, to inflict whatever torture they please upon such animals without liability to prosecution or punishment; and whether he proposes to introduce a Bill to amend the Act?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The effect of the decision appears to be in substance as stated in the question. The subject seems to be a very proper one for further legislation, but I cannot hope to deal with it this Session.

**SIR D. MACFARLANE**: Is it not a fact that any person for monetary or other reasons may inflict any amount of torture on animals which are not domestic, and need further legislation go beyond the omission of the word "domestic" in the Cruelty to Animals Act?

**MR. ASQUITH**: I cannot, without further consideration, give an opinion as to the amount of legislation that would be necessary to carry out the views of the hon. Member. Any legislation, however, will occupy time.

### DERELICT LAND IN ESSEX.

**MAJOR RASCH**: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will allow the map attached to the Report on Essex Agriculture, showing the extent of land derelict and out of tillage in that county, to be exhibited in the Tea Room of the House, for the information of hon. Members?

***MR. H. GLADSTONE**: There is no positive objection; but as the map in question has been circulated to all hon. Members, and is readily accessible in the Library, I do not think it necessary to exhibit it in the Tea Room.

### WIMBLEDON RIFLE RANGE.

**MR. MACDONA**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that John Ingram, whilst digging a grave in Putney Cemetery on Tuesday, the 22nd instant, was shot in the back by one of a squad of Volunteers practising at the Wimbledon rifle range, and died from the effects yesterday; and whether, in view of the great danger to the lives of people using the common or living in the neighbourhood, he will bring the matter under the notice of His Royal Highness the Ranger, with a view to the prohibition of any further firing in so dangerous a locality?

***MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: The hon. Member is evidently not aware that Wimbledon Common is not Crown property, and that the Duke of Cambridge is, therefore, not the Ranger of it, nor does such an office, so far as I know, exist. The common is, I believe, the property of the ratepayers of a district within a certain area of it, under an Act of Parliament passed in 1871. In the same Act the rights of certain Volunteer corps who had ranges on it were preserved to them.

### PLEURO-PNEUMONIA IN THE ISLE OF THANET.

**MR. CHAPLIN** (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is now in a position to state what were the circumstances connected with the recent outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia in the Isle of Thanet; and to what sources of infection the Veterinary Department of the Board attribute the contraction of the disease?

**MR. H. GARDNER**: The outbreak in question occurred at a farm near Minster, in the Isle of Thanet. The usual measures were immediately taken to trace and slaughter the animals which had been exposed to infection, and upwards of 120 animals have thus been dealt with, of which seven have been found to be diseased. The inquiries are still proceeding, but as yet we have no reason to suppose that any of the animals which have been in contact with the disease have been removed out of the district. No further information has been elicited as to the origin of the outbreak, and I think there is not much room for doubt that the outbreak is due to the introduction of animals from the neighbourhood of London.

**Mr. CHAPLIN**: Am I right in saying the right hon. Gentleman told us there had been no outbreak for some months previously?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I believe the right hon. Gentleman is correct, but I have not the dates before me.

**Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN** asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had seen the report of a second outbreak in the Isle of Thanet?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I have seen no such report.

### CANADIAN CATTLE.

**Mr. CHAPLIN**: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture, in reference to his statement, on 1st May instant, that cases had occurred of diseased cattle being imported from Canada under the administration of the Board of Agriculture in the late Government, if he can say what those cases were and when they occurred? At the same time, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the special examination of the lungs of Canadian cattle, which he announced on the 24th of April, has commenced?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: The cases to which I referred in my answer of the 1st instant were those of five animals stated to have been imported from Montreal by the *City of Lincoln* in September, 1890. The right hon. Gentleman will find certain particulars of these cases on pages 96 and 97 of the Report of the Veterinary Department for 1890, the outbreaks being numbered 35, 53, 60, 68, and 69 respectively. The special examination of the lungs of Canadian cattle commenced on the 17th instant.

**Mr. CHAPLIN** asked whether it was not a fact that there was no evidence whatever in these cases that the animals came from Canada?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: My information is entirely opposed to that statement. The Papers distinctly point out that the animals came from Canada.

### THE CHURCH IN WALES.

**Mr. D. THOMAS** (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant the Return, standing on the Paper this day, relating to the revenues of the Church in Wales?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I find that no modern information is available as to the ownership of impropriate tithe rent-charge, and that the collection of such information would be a very long and difficult task. I must point out that the proper allocation of ecclesiastical revenue, after the passing of the Bill for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales, could not be shown in the form of a Return at the present time, the settlement of such allocation being one of the functions of the Commissioners to be appointed under the Bill. In these circumstances, I cannot grant the Return for which the hon. Member asks. I have, however, ascertained that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will be able, within a reasonable period, to furnish a Return, by parishes and counties, of the property of the Church in Wales in glebe, in tithe rent-charge, and from other sources; and if my hon. Friend will put on the Paper a Motion for a Return in that form, I shall be happy to assent to it, and it will be prepared with as little delay as possible.

### NEWFOUNDLAND HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

**Mr. A. C. MORTON**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office have considered the possibility of an early Dissolution of the Newfoundland House of Assembly being asked for; and whether the Government will consider the advisability or recommending the Governor General of the Colony to refuse to consent to a Dissolution, at least until after all the Election Petitions have been dealt with by the Law Courts.

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: The late Government in Newfoundland resigned because the Governor refused to grant them a

Dissolution, but I cannot answer a hypothetical question.

### MAGISTRATES' FEES.

**MR. LEESE** (Lancashire, N.E., Accrington): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he has yet decided whether it is necessary that the writ of *dedimus poteslatem* heretofore accustomed to be taken out by Magistrates on their appointment to the County Bench in Lancashire should continue to be so taken out, or whether it may be discontinued and the cost of each appointment thereby reduced? The hon. Member, in putting the question, stated that by a printer's error the word "*potestatem*" had not inappropriately been printed "*poteslatem*."

**THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER** (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): I have come to the conclusion that there is no sufficient reason why the practice of taking out the writ of *dedimus potestatem* by County Magistrates upon their appointment should continue in Lancashire. The discontinuance of the practice will, no doubt, have the effect of reducing the expense to the persons appointed to be Justices. The question what is the proper fee to be fixed as payable upon appointment is now under my consideration.

### MILITARY EXAMINATIONS.

**MR. SETON-KARR** (St. Helen's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the system now coming into force of allowing candidates for the entrance examinations for Woolwich and Sandhurst to choose their own place of written examination from about 20 different centres in the United Kingdom can also be extended to the *vivâ voce* and medical examinations; if this extension cannot be made, whether he will state the reason for thus limiting the advantages of the proposed change; and whether he is aware that the above limitation practically prevents the proposed change from conferring any pecuniary advantage or benefit on candidates and their parents?

*__MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN__: I have nothing to add to the answer I gave as to *vivâ voce* examinations on the 30th of April last. As regards the medical examinations, which, I may observe, only the successful candidates have to attend, the experiment of holding them at the headquarters of the district has proved far from satisfactory, and 70 per cent. of the candidates prefer London as the place of examination.

**MR. SETON-KARR**: What was the substance of the answer of April 30?

**MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: It was to the effect that there must be uniformity of result in these examinations.

**MR. SETON-KARR**: Does the limitation have the effect suggested in the last paragraph of my question?

**MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: I do not think it does.

### THE LONDON CAB STRIKE.

**MR. LOUGH** (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he has taken with reference to the grievances of the London cabmen, which were brought before him by a deputation last autumn and by various questions put in this House and privately since then; and whether, taking into consideration the public inconvenience caused by strikes, he is willing to appoint a Committee of this House to consider the relations of the industry to the Home Office, and to recommend such changes as may be necessary as to transferring the control to the London County Council, the limitation of drivers' licences, the amount and disposal of the cab plate revenue, the jurisdiction of the police courts, the relations with the Railway Companies, tariff, payments to owners, stands and shelters in the streets, regulations, and all other matters touching the conduct of the Metropolitan cab service?

**MR. ASQUITH**: The matter has engaged my attention, and I have had drawn, and hope to be able to introduce, a Bill which will remedy some of the evils connected with what is called "bilking" brought under my notice at the deputation referred to. All the Railway Companies have been communicated with on the subject of the complaints relating to the practice of the different companies made by the deputation. I am not, as at present advised, prepared to recommend the appointment of a Committee to consider the somewhat multifarious subjects referred to by my hon. Friend.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman thinks it advisable to limit the number of licences granted for drivers and cabs, as it is practically apparent to everybody that there are too many cabs at the present time?

Mr. ASQUITH: I think that is a suggestion well worthy of consideration. My own opinion is that there are too many cabs.

### THE CONVICT DALY.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the sentence of 10 years' penal servitude passed upon the Italian Anarchist, Polti, at the Central Criminal Court on the 4th instant; and whether, looking to the similarity of Polti's offence to that for which John Daly was condemned to penal servitude for life, and having regard to the fact that John Daly has now been over 10 years in prison, he will reconsider Daly's case with a view to his release?

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, may I ask whether it is not a fact that, so far from Daly's offence being similar to that of Polti and his confederates, the latter were avowed Anarchists who did not disguise their intention to use explosives, while Daly, who was convicted of treason-felony, entirely repudiated any connection with dynamite offences, and alleged that the bombs found in his possession were planted on him by the police, a statement borne out by the Chief Constable of Birmingham; and whether that fact is not an additional reason why Daly, who has already been in prison 10 years, should be released?

Mr. ASQUITH: I can only repeat what I have said on previous occasions—that the offence of which Daly was properly convicted was at least equal in gravity to that of the other persons referred to. Comparisons of this kind between criminal cases are apt to be misleading. The hon. Member selects for comparison with Daly's case the case of Polti, whose sentence was for 10 years, and passes over that of Polti's accomplice, Ferrara, whose sentence was for 20 years. These persons were convicted of offences committed under widely different circumstances, and both were sentenced by the same Judge, one of the most experienced criminal lawyers on the English Bench. Daly's case has been repeatedly under my consideration, and I regret that I cannot consistently with my public duty add anything to my previous statements on the subject.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR asked whether the Englishmen convicted at Walsall of conspiracy got sentences ranges from 5 to 10 years, and whether the right hon. Gentleman would take that fact into account in considering Daly's case?

Mr. ASQUITH: I am very familiar with that case.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Is it in the interest of good government that English dynamitards and Italian anarchists should get 10 years, while Irishmen like Daly should be sent to prison for the whole term of their natural life?

Mr. ASQUITH: That is a very argumentative question, which could not possibly be answered without careful analysis of the facts of widely different cases. I cannot enter into that in answer to a question. I have only to repeat what I have said on previous occasions—that, in my opinion, the time has not come at which it would be proper for the Government to advise any interference with Daly's sentence.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Was John Daly not convicted of treason-felony?

Mr. ASQUITH: He was convicted of treason-felony.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Is that not a reason why his case should be carefully considered by the Government with a view to his release?

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I wish to ask another question, and I apologise to the right hon. Gentleman for troubling him.

Mr. W. REDMOND: I do not apologise for troubling him.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Is it not a fact that every Irishman, except one, who was convicted in England of conspiracy or treason-felony within the last 10 years was sentenced to penal servitude for life?

Mr. ASQUITH: No; that is not the case. Several of them got shorter sentences.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Is it not a fact that before the last General Election the Irish people were led to understand that amnesty was to be extended to Daly and the other prisoners?

[No answer was given.]

**Mr. W. REDMOND**: I charge the Government with breach of faith in this matter. It is an outrage.

### NAVY BOOT CONTRACTS.

**Mr. C. SHAW** (Stafford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he would explain why the contract for Navy boots has been removed from Stafford; and whether the Admiralty is aware that in the district where the contract is now placed no Trades Union exists to protect the *employés*; that the work is made and finished in the homes of the workmen; that there is no restriction as to the number of hours worked by men and boys; and that the wages are 3½d. per pair less than the wages which were paid in Stafford?

***Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH**: No contract for Navy boots has been removed from Stafford; but when recently tenders were invited for new contracts, the Stafford tender was the highest, and was, therefore, unsuccessful. The contracts, which contain the usual clause requiring the payment of the current wages of the district, were placed in several widely scattered districts of Great Britain, in some of which Trades Unions exist, though not in all. All the work is done in factories, except in Northamptonshire, where a small part of it is done in the workpeople's homes (free from restrictions as to hours, &c.). This is in accordance with old local customs, which are dying out in consequence of the introduction of machinery. I am informed that as regards part of the Northamptonshire contracts—namely, at Raunds, the wages are 3½d. per pair less than at Stafford. Communications from the Trades Union and Trades Council of Stafford on this subject are now under consideration at the Admiralty.

### RAILWAY RATES.

**Sir J. WHITEHEAD**: In consequence of the indefinite answer given to me to-day, and failing a satisfactory assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on Tuesday next I shall move the adjournment in order to bring the serious position of the railway rates question before the House.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Supply—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

### CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (SECOND VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,897,350, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, viz.:—

### CIVIL SERVICES.

#### Class I.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Harbours, &c., under Board of Trade, and Lighthouses Abroad ... | 2,000 |
| Peterhead Harbour ... ... ... | 2,000 |
| Rates on Government Property ... | 15,000 |
| Public Works and Buildings, Ireland | 30,000 |
| Railways, Ireland ... ... ... | 7,000 |

#### Class II.

United Kingdom and England:—

| | |
|---|---|
| House of Lords, Offices ... ... | 8,000 |
| House of Commons, Offices .. ... | 12,000 |
| Treasury and Subordinate Departments ... ... ... ... | 14,000 |
| Home Office and Subordinate Departments ... ... ... | 18,000 |
| Foreign Office... ... ... ... | 14,000 |
| Colonial Office ... ... ... | 6,500 |
| Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments ... ... | 3,000 |
| Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments ... ... ... | 30,000 |
| Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid ... ... ... ... | 15,000 |
| Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade ... ... ... | – – |
| Board of Agriculture ... ... | 5,000 |
| Charity Commission... ... ... | 7,000 |
| Civil Service Commission ... ... | 7,000 |
| Exchequer and Audit Department... | 10,000 |
| Friendly Societies, Registry ... | 700 |
| Local Government Board ... ... | 30,000 |
| Lunacy Commission ... ... ... | 2,500 |
| Mint (including Coinage) ... ... | – – |
| National Debt Office... ... ... | 2,500 |
| Public Record Office ... ... ... | 3,000 |
| Public Works Loan Commission ... | 2,000 |
| Registrar General's Office ... ... | 7,000 |
| Stationery Office and Printing ... | 100,000 |
| Woods, Forests, &c., Office of ... | 4,000 |
| Works and Public Buildings, Office of | 9,000 |
| Secret Service... ... ... ... | 9,000 |

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Scotland :— | |
| Secretary for Scotland ... ... | 2,000 |
| Fishery Board ... ... ... | 4,000 |
| Lunacy Commission ... ... ... | 1,000 |
| Registrar General's Office ... ... | 500 |
| Board of Supervision ... ... | 1,500 |
| Ireland :— | |
| Lord Lieutenant's Household ... | 1,000 |
| Chief Secretary and Subordinate Departments ... ... ... | 7,000 |
| Charitable Donations and Bequests Office ... ... ... ... | 300 |
| Local Government Board ... ... | 15,000 |
| Public Record Office ... ... ... | 1,000 |
| Public Works Office ... ... ... | 6,000 |
| Registrar General's Office ... ... | 2,000 |
| Valuation and Boundary Survey ... | 3,000 |

### CLASS III.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| United Kingdom and England :— | |
| Law Charges ... ... ... ... | 18,000 |
| Miscellaneous Legal Expenses ... | 10,000 |
| Supreme Court of Judicature ... | 65,000 |
| Land Registry ... ... ... | 1,300 |
| County Courts ... ... ... | 4,000 |
| Police Courts (London and Sheerness) ... ... ... ... | 500 |
| Police, England and Wales ... ... | 5,000 |
| Prisons, England and the Colonies ... | 90,000 |
| Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain ... ... ... | 66,000 |
| Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum | 4,000 |
| Scotland :— | |
| Law Charges and Courts of Law ... | 17,000 |
| Register House, Edinburgh ... ... | 6,500 |
| Crofters' Commission ... ... | 1,000 |
| Prisons, Scotland ... ... ... | 15,000 |
| Ireland :— | |
| Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions ... ... ... ... | 12,000 |
| Supreme Court of Judicature, and other Legal Departments ... | 18,000 |
| Land Commission ... ... ... | 11,000 |
| County Court Officers, &c. ... ... | 21,000 |
| Dublin Metropolitan Police, &c. ... | 10,000 |
| Constabulary ... ... ... ... | 270,000 |
| Prisons, Ireland ... ... ... | 20,000 |
| Reformatory and Industrial Schools | 25,000 |
| Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum | 1,000 |

### CLASS IV.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| United Kingdom and England :— | |
| Public Education, England and Wales | 1,360,000 |
| Science and Art Department, United Kingdom ... ... ... ... | 115,000 |
| British Museum ... ... ... | 37,000 |
| National Gallery ... ... ... | 4,000 |
| National Portrait Gallery ... ... | 500 |
| Scientific Investigations, &c., United Kingdom ... ... ... ... | 5,000 |
| Universities and Colleges, Great Britain, and Intermediate Education, Wales ... ... ... | 22,000 |
| London University ... ... ... | – – |
| Scotland :— | |
| Public Education ... ... ... | 275,000 |
| National Gallery ... ... ... | 1,000 |
| Ireland :— | |
| Public Education ... ... ... | 300,000 |
| Endowed Schools Commissioners... | 150 |
| National Gallery ... ... ... | 500 |
| Queen's Colleges ... ... ... | 1,500 |

### CLASS V.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Diplomatic Services and Consular Services ... ... ... .. | 90,000 |
| Slave Trade Services ... ... | 1,500 |
| Colonial Services, including South Africa ... ... ... ... | 15,000 |
| Subsidies to Telegraph Companies, &c. ... ... ... ... | 15,500 |

### CLASS VI.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Superannuation and Retired Allowances ... ... ... ... | 100,000 |
| Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c. ... ... ... ... | 1,300 |
| Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency ... ... ... | – – |
| Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain ... | 600 |
| Pauper Lunatics, Ireland ... ... | 40,000 |
| Hospitals and Charities, Ireland ... | 5,000 |

### CLASS VII.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Temporary Commissions ... ... | 9,000 |
| Miscellaneous Expenses ... ... | 1,000 |
| Diseases of Animals ... ... ... | 10,000 |
| Highlands and Islands of Scotland | 5,000 |
| Repayments to the Local Loans Fund | – – |
| Hobart (Tasmania) Exhibition, 1894–5 ... ... ... ... | 1,000 |
| Total for Civil Services ... | £3,527,350 |

### REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Customs ... ... ... ... | 40,000 |
| Inland Revenue ... ... ... | 60,000 |
| Post Office ... ... ... ... | 650,000 |
| Post Office Packet Service ... ... | 170,000 |
| Post Office Telegraphs ... ... | 450,000 |
| Total for Revenue Departments ... ... ... | £1,370,000 |
| Grand Total ... | £4,897,350" |

**MR. A. C. MORTON** said, he had given notice to reduce this Vote by £2,000 in order to obtain some explanation. The strong objection he had with regard to the Vote of £2,000, as put in the present Estimates, for the Kitchen Committee was that, as far as he was aware, the Committee had refused to give them any balance-sheet or particulars with regard to the expenditure of money; and he thought, therefore, he was right in asking the Committee of the House to refuse to grant money unless under the conditions that they had proper accounts submitted to them in the ordinary way. As far as he understood the finances of this country, they had properly-audited accounts and full details given them with reference to every item of the £90,000,000 of money expended by the Government except the Secret Service Fund. If the details furnished were not sufficient, the Government were always willing to give them further details. He wanted to know why the Kitchen Committee, this one small authority in connection with their finances, should refuse to give particulars? Was it because they were ashamed or afraid of something that might appear in the accounts to the detriment of somebody? He did not say that that was the case; but when this House had ordered inquiries with regard to particular accounts, it had generally been because the parties were ashamed of their own accounts being seen. He knew that some Members of it claimed that the Kitchen Committee was a close corporation, and need not give any accounts to anybody; and he believed they claimed that, as they were an unpaid Committee, they ought not to be asked to present their accounts. Other Committees doing a great deal more work than the Kitchen Committee had no objection to furnishing accounts, so that the House and the country generally might know what they were doing. It would be no trouble to the Kitchen Committee to present these accounts. With regard to the contention that it was not a public matter, he would point out that they did a great deal of public business. They had their bars up- and down-stairs, and all about the place; they sold as much whisky and other refreshments as they could, and made as much money as they could. There were great complaints with regard to the somewhat extravagant charges made to the British public in connection with the supply of refreshments; there must be a great deal of profit made, and on that, if on no other ground, they had a right to see what this Committee were doing. A great many of the public asked why should they be called upon to pay £2,000 per annum in connection with a business on which there ought to be a large amount of profit, considering the prices that were charged. They had got to bear in mind that the Kitchen Committee had no rent to pay; the House supplied coal and light and a number of other things in connection with these services, and made no charge. There were no licences to be paid for, and consequently there ought to be a very large amount of profit instead of the Kitchen Committee asking for this £2,000. He had been told that he could have a private view of the accounts, but he refused any such thing. What he wanted was to have a balance-sheet presented in a proper and straightforward manner, so that all Members of the House, as well as the public—who had to pay in connection with the Public Purse—might judge if this business was carried on in a proper and efficient manner. Although they were asked to vote £2,000, he noticed it had been stated in the public Press that they did not pay their waiters properly. They had been told that this extra £1,000 a year was asked for for the purpose of paying the waiters; but as they did not see the accounts, they did not know how the money was expended. Unless he got a satisfactory assurance that in future the accounts would be presented in a proper and business-like way, he should press this matter to a Division, and, with the view of showing that he wanted to know something about it, he begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £2,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £12,000, House of Commons Offices, be reduced by £2,000." —(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

*MR. HERBERT (Croydon) said, he noticed that the hon. Member for Peterborough had not taken any exception in the remarks he had made to the increased grant which now, for the first time, was £2,000 instead of £1,000, but he had arraigned the action of the Kitchen Committee all round on the general ground that with regard to every account or every sum put down in the Estimates the House was entitled to have full particulars. He should say, to begin with, as the House of Commons very well knew, this Committee was formed year after year from all Parties in the House, almost every section being represented in order that the representation of that Committee might be representative of the whole House, and he imagined that the very object of having the Committee appointed at all was to relieve the House from the very great and responsible duty of looking after a very big business. It was more convenient that a big business of this sort should be conducted by a Committee sitting upstairs rather than that the business should be carried on in the House.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I am not asking for that.

*Mr. HERBERT said, he would remind the House that the accounts were submitted not yearly but quarterly to the Auditor General, and the Committee had a quarterly balance-sheet presented to them and a close eye was kept by the Committee on all the accounts presented to them. In justice to the management, he must say that the Committee had received no complaints, but a large amount of praise from the experts in the Auditor General's office as to the way in which the accounts were kept. The Committee had discussed the question of publishing their accounts, and had come to the conclusion that, in the interest of the working of the Committee, it would be extremely unadvisable that they should be published to the House.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Has a vote been taken upon it?

Mr. HERBERT did not think a vote had been taken upon it, but during all the previous years up to this, although they had taken no actual vote upon it, that had been the unanimous opinion of the Committee up to this year, and he hoped soon to be able to say that it was the opinion of the present Committee. In running a business of this sort there were a great many things they were not the least ashamed of; but which, in the course of trade, it would not be advisable to have published in all the newspapers. Anybody who had experience in a large business concern would bear him out in what he said. The hon. Member also said that either he considered, or the public considered, or the gentlemen of the Press considered, that in a big business of this sort very large profits must be made. He would so far break the rule which the Committee had laid down in this instance as to inform hon. Members what had been the large profits made by the Kitchen Committee during the years 1887 to 1893 inclusive. In the year 1887 the net profit was £46 12s. 10d.; in 1888, £4 2s. 11d.; in 1889 there was a net loss of £25 14s. 9d. In 1890, a record year, the nett profits were £323 4s. 3d. In 1891 the net loss was £93 3s. 10d., and, in 1892, £141 5s. 11d. In 1893, up to June 30, the nett profit was £359 11s. 11d., but the fatal results of an Autumn Session brought them down to £6 14s. 5d. on December 31. These figures would show that the alleged large profits was rather a case of imagination on the part of the writers. Everybody knew, who had watched the business in this House, that, however carefully they might work the business, it was so uncertain, and the Committee had such difficulties to contend with—having in many instances to prepare meals for several hundreds, when perhaps only 60 or 70 might sit down—that they could not secure anything like the profits which might be secured by a restaurant or a club, because the business was not a continuous one. There was a further difficulty which did not take place either in a club or a restaurant—namely, that the House did not sit on Saturday or Sunday, so that at the end of the week they had two days on which there was no business at all, whilst there was a considerable amount of expense to bear. Again, during the Recess they had also a considerable amount of expense whilst they had no business. The Committee had asked for this extra £1,000 because they found there had been considerable complaints upon a subject which the hon. Member had referred to—that was, the wages of the servants. A great deal of misrepresentation had been going on about this subject, and in justice to the demand of the Committee for this extra £1,000 he should like to state that whilst under the system which had prevailed up to the present year the Kitchen Committee only received £1,000 a year towards the wages of the servants, the wages paid last year amounted to £3,957. The result was, that in order to make up the deficit they had to make a profit on what they sold. The extra £1,000 asked for would be devoted to the payment of higher wages. The wages of the waiters on the permanent Sessional staff averaged about 30s. a week, a rate which was sufficiently high to attract good men. In addition to that the food they received was valued at 12s. 6d. a week. As to the waiters who came in on the job, the Committee came to the conclusion that if the regulation with regard to the abolition of gratuities was enforced it was only fair that the men should receive some increase in wages, and an increase of 1s. an evening had been given. The Committee had now settled to give them 3s. 6d., instead of 2s. 6d. an evening as formerly. These men came in about 6 o'clock or a little later. He thought that was fair remuneration, and, so far as he knew, the men did not object to it. Of course, they could not be paid 5s. a day—which were the wages of a skilled artizan—and the 3s. 6d. for the short time they were employed was considered very fair remuneration. Returning once more to the question of the accounts, he would add that they were audited quarterly and were very carefully looked after. He would be perfectly willing to show them to the hon. Member if he desired to go through them, provided that he did not utilise the information for publication in the Press or otherwise. He hoped the House would grant the extra £1,000, because if the Kitchen Committee got it they would be able to do more for the comfort of Members who dine in the House.

Mr. A. C. MORTON asked whether the hon. Gentleman would take the opinion of the Kitchen Committee with regard to the Returns?

Mr. HERBERT said, the only reason why he did not ask the House to come to a decision with regard to the Returns, when the question came up a short time previously, was that he could not then speak on behalf of the Committee on the matter, as it had not been considered by the Committee. Since then, however, the question had come before the Kitchen Committee.

*Mr. ROBY (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles) said, he desired to thank the Kitchen Committee for the great trouble they must necessarily take in discharging their duties. Some improvements might be made in the kitchen service; but as one who dined in the House very frequently, he thought, on the whole, considering the difficulties of the service, that the dinners were very fairly done. But he could not understand why there should be any objection to the publication of an abstract of the accounts of the Kitchen Committee. What was wanted was a Return, such as was issued by all clubs, of the expenditure of the year, showing to Members in what directions there appeared to be a little parsimony, or a little extravagance, or a little bad management on the part of the Kitchen Committee; and when they came to consider that this money voted by the House was in addition to coals, gas, plant necessary for the cooking operations for the convenience of Members, they would see it was a matter in which, to some extent, the public had a legitimate interest. This subsidy might not be the best way of paying Members—he thought Members, if paid at all, should be paid in the proper way, and then pay themselves the full cost of their luncheons and dinners in the House; but so long as this contribution was made towards the luncheons and dinners of Members, some account—he did not say a detailed account—should be given to the public of the expenditure of the money. In saying that, he should be very sorry if he were understood to convey that there was even the slightest doubt or suspicion of the Kitchen Committee in the minds of any Members; for no feeling of the kind existed in any part of the House.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he would be quite satisfied with what was called a club return. In fact, he sent the Kitchen Committee a copy of the balance-sheet of the National Liberal Club as an idea of the sort of thing he wanted. He did that because the National Liberal Club was the biggest and best club in London.

*Mr. HERBERT said, the cases were hardly analogous. The balance-sheet of a club was distributed amongst the members of the club at the general meeting, and as a rule did not go beyond the members. But the balance-sheet of the Kitchen Committee, if published, would be made public, which would be extremely inadvisable.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that, after the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Eccles, it seemed to him that unless the accounts were published there would be an idea abroad that they were in the habit of feasting in a grandiose sort of way at the expense of the public. His hon. Friend said they were getting cheap dinners as a sort of payment for their services. He did not understand the thing in that way. He understood they paid the real prices for their dinners; but it often happened, owing to changes in the business of the House, that dinners were provided which were not consumed, and this £2,000 went to cover the waste. He had not the slightest desire himself to see the accounts; but when he heard the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee say that there were some reasons why the public should not see the details of this expenditure of public money, he could not help thinking that the only possible objection was that there was so much liquor drunk by Members, and by gentlemen who come down to the House on business, that the public would be perfectly horrified when they heard the amount of liquor that was consumed there. Under the circumstances, he thought some sort of a Return, such as that given by clubs, should be submitted to the House.

*MR. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, &c.) said, as a Member of the Kitchen Committee, that Members were wrong if they thought the whole of the money expended by the Committee was public money, and that therefore it came under the same category as other moneys voted by the House. So far from that being the case, a considerably larger sum was paid out by the Committee in wages alone than the amount of the annual grant received on account of wages. He would have no objection to the publication of a club balance-sheet; and he should be glad to hear whether the Secretary to the Treasury had any advice to give to the Committee on the subject. He would like to point out to the Committee that if this grant was withdrawn, or even if it were retained at the old rate of £1,000 a a year, the Kitchen Committee would be obliged to charge considerably higher prices for provisions and liquors supplied to Members or to charge table money.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said, as a Member of the Kitchen Committee, that he believed there was nothing to conceal in the accounts of the Committee; and he had always thought—though in this he was in a minority on the Committee—that there should be published some sort of balance-sheet such as was supplied to members of clubs. He would remind those Members who seemed to think that the Kitchen Committee were making large profits that when the catering was done by outside firms, prices were much higher, and very little profit was made by the caterers. He succeeded on the Committee, as the representative of the Irish Party, his old friend and colleague, the late Mr. Joseph Biggar. The Irish Party had endeavoured to obtain representation on the Committee to the extent of two Members, which they thought they were entitled to, because of their numbers; and, failing in that, the Party nominated Mr. Biggar as their representative. Mr. Biggar had not been on the Committee very long, when the Irish Party were informed that if they only withdrew Mr. Biggar they could nominate any two Members they pleased; but this they refused to do, with the result that Members generally had benefited by Mr. Biggar's labours.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) said, he desired to say a few words in response to the invitation of the hon. Member for St. Andrews. His own personal feeling was trust in the Kitchen Committee. The Kitchen Committee had considered the question and had come to the conclusion that it would be indiscreet and unwise to publish the accounts; and having full confidence in the Committee, he would give way to their wishes in the matter. But, at the same time, he thought a case had to some extent been made out for the publication of the accounts. He did not suppose there were many Members who wished to look into the accounts, but perhaps the Kitchen Committee might see their way to give some information which would satisfy the hon. Member for Peterborough and any other Member of the House who was anxious to be informed on the subject. He thought the House generally was very much indebted to the Kitchen Committee for the great trouble they took in the matter, though he was quite sure this work was anything but pleasant.

*MR. HERBERT said, he could not make any pledge without consulting the Committee, but he would see whether the Committee had any objection to publish some sort of accounts, which, without going fully into details, would satisfy the Resolution the hon. Member for Peterborough had placed on the Paper.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I wish to ask my hon. Friend the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, whether the Committee have been using Canadian mutton and Australian lamb, and that they refuse to give these details in order that they may not hurt the feelings of Members representing agricultural constituencies?

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, they were told the extra £1,000 now asked for was to increase the wages of the waiters. Last year the House of Commons was charged with sweating its waiters. It was said they were paid only half what waiters received in other places. The defence of the manager of the Kitchen Department and the Kitchen Committee was that the men were paid 2s. 6d. and that they made another 2s. 6d. in tips. Many Members complained of bad attendance in the dining-room because they did not give tips. But it was time to stop this grant altogether. He thought Members ought to pay the full value of their dinners, and not to "sponge" on the nation in this way in order to get 2d. or 3d. off the price. He hoped they would have a strong Chancellor of the Exchequer who would refuse to give the money.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, the subject was very important, for unless Members could digest their dinners they would not be able to digest the affairs of the nation. He denied that Members were "sponging" on the nation. They did not get as good or as cheap a dinner as they could get in a club notwithstanding the grant, while 40 per cent. was added to the price of wines by the Kitchen Committee. He thought the waiters should be paid better wages, because it was not pleasant to be looked at during dinner by men who were badly paid or badly fed.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford) said, he was entirely in favour of stopping the subvention for dinners in the House of Commons. No one on his side of the House stayed to dine there except on exceptional occasions, so that they had nothing to lose by the stoppage of the subvention. If the money were stopped the dinners would be reduced to the level of the National Liberal Club, and if that were done he was sure that even hon. Members opposite would dine elsewhere.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I must protest in the strongest manner against two hours of the House of Commons being wasted in discussing tips, when we have no time to discuss the great Imperial matters of the nation.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, that in the first place the discussion had not taken two hours, and in the second place——

Colonel Lockwood rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I wanted to withdraw the Motion.

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, and negatived.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he regretted the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not present, but the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to answer the point he wished to raise. On Monday they were discussing building on vacant sites, and the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissoner of Works had said they could do nothing without the consent of the Treasury. Everyone would admit that these sites ought to be utilised——

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, it was not in Order to go into the question of vacant sites on a Vote on Account.

*The CHAIRMAN said, it was out of Order, and called upon Mr. Lough.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I want to move a reduction.

*The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot do so now.

### The Cab Strike.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: I have put down a reduction of £10. I have not yet said anything about it. If I am not in Order, I can soon put myself in Order. However, I do not wish to delay the Committee. At the same time, I do not wish to be snuffed out by the Treasury.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said, that the next Vote was for the Home Office, and on that he wanted to call attention to the cab strike. The control of the London cabs was entirely in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary. After the very unsatisfactory answer of the right hon. Gentleman that afternoon with reference to the strike which was now proceeding in the Metropolis, he would move to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman by £500 in order to claim his sympathy for the men who were struggling with such great difficulties. The control of the cab industry in London was in the hands of a Government Department, and all interested in it thought that it had been very badly controlled. He appealed, therefore, to hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House to use their influence with the Home Office in order to get that Department to take a just and favourable view of the present strike and the difficulties connected with it. This strike differed from most labour contests of which they had had experience. It was not a case of working men struggling to get a higher wage, or for employment, but it was a case of a number of people trying to buy something more cheaply than they were able to do at present. For some reason, there did not appear to be much sympathy with the men, but he thought that if hon. Members would give a little consideration to the matter they would take a more generous view of their difficulties. There was no ill-feeling between the drivers and the cab proprietors, notwithstanding the strike, one reason being that one-half the cabs in London were owned by small proprietors, for 5,000 belonged to 3,000 owners; and the other half were in the hands of larger owners.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Gentleman would not be in Order in discussing a proposal to alter the law. He could, however, refer to the conduct of the Home Secretary.

MR. LOUGH said, the whole thing that was wrong was the control of this important industry by the Home Office. If the representatives of that Department took a wise and broad view of their responsibility in this matter there would be an end to the strike, and to all the difficulties that arose with respect to the management of the cab business of London. He would point out that the present control was an antiquated one, inasmuch as the Rules were framed 30 years ago, when there were no tramways, no penny fares on omnibuses, and no underground railways. The conditions under which the cab industry was carried on had been altered to the detriment of 10,000 cabmen, representing probably a population of 100,000. All these changes had taken place, but there had been no alteration in the conditions under which the men worked, and the Home Secretary ought to give the matter his consideration in order to see whether new and better arrangements could not be made. The industry at present laboured under three heavy taxes. There were taxes of 5s., 15s., and 40s. on each cab, and these amounted to 1s. 2d. a week. This was the first charge that must be met; it was an unjust one, which made a serious difference to the drivers; and it could not be dealt with except by an alteration of the law. The £2 plates produced £35,000 a year, and that was paid into the Police Fund, which was completely under the control of the Home Office. Last year that fund went up from £358,000 to £387,000, an increment of £30,000, almost equal to the amount of the cab licences. The money was not required by the Police Fund, because the rate supplied all that was necessary. Then, the freedom with which licences were granted created another great difficulty in the trade. The Home Office granted a driver's licence to every applicant who paid 5s. and fulfilled certain conditions; and there were 15,000 holders of these licences, which showed that the trade was overcrowded. There were only 4,000 cabs working now, and the experience of that state of things indicated that 15,000 cabs was twice too many, and suggested that the issue of licences should stop when the total number reached 10,000 or 11,000. The Home Secretary issued a Schedule of fares which the cabmen had to charge the public, and made other Regulations controlling the drivers, but he did not provide any protection for the cabman in respect of the price which he might have to pay for his vehicle. As to the admission of cabs to railway stations, it would be satisfactory if some impartial authority was invited to discuss the matter with the Railway Companies and the drivers, to see if some arrangement satisfactory to both could not be arrived at. The worst grievance which the cabmen had to labour under was the very unsatisfactory Criminal Code to which they were subjected. The cabmen were placed entirely under the power of the police, and the existing law was entirely against the driver and in favour of the public. If one of the public made a bargain with a cabman to drive him under the legal fare he could enforce that bargain against the cabman, but if a cabman made a bargain to charge more than the legal fare he could not enforce it. The chief evil under which the men laboured was the absolute tyranny which the police exercised over them, which was carried out in a way detrimental to the interests of the citizens. For example, there were not enough cab-stands, and those which existed were too often an appendage to some public-house. The cab stood on the rank outside while the cabman was inside drinking. He could quote one case where certain benevolent people, at a cost of about £200, provided a cab shelter to be placed in the Cromwell Road; but, though an appeal was made to the police to authorise the placing of the shelter there, no support was given to it, and the objection was urged that it would take away the custom from a public-house which the cabmen were in the habit of using. The police brought charges of every kind against the drivers, and at one police court as many as 20 or 25 were disposed of in a single afternoon. The cases came on on Tuesday and Friday afternoons at 4 o'clock, and as many as 80 had been decided in a day, cabmen being fined 2s. 6d. and 4s. each for loafing, because of the want of stands. The police court was a very unsatisfactory court to which to refer small grievances affecting cabmen, and he submitted that some civil court should be provided to deal with such cases.

The CHAIRMAN said, he must point out that the Home Secretary had nothing to do with the matters with which the hon. Gentleman was dealing.

Mr. LOUGH: The Home Secretary controls the Magistrates.

*The CHAIRMAN: The Magistrates act under the sanction of the law. The Home Secretary is responsible only for his administrative acts, and not for the acts of the Magistrates.

Mr. LOUGH suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should grant an inquiry into the whole subject, either by a Committee of the House or by a Departmental Committee. The right hon. Gentleman had done himself a great deal of credit by the way in which he had dealt with labour struggles all over the country, but example was better than precept, and the position of the 10,000 cabmen who were directly under his control was a disgrace to the Home Office. He moved the reduction of the right hon. Gentleman's salary by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £6,500, for the Home Office, be reduced by £500, in respect of the Salary of the Home Secretary."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): I cannot complain of the tone of my hon. Friend's remarks as far as they relate to myself, but I must express my regret that he should have made the Vote for my salary the occasion for ventilating a number of grievances affecting the cab industry, with which I have no more to do in my character as Home Secretary than has my hon. Friend himself. Whether or not the law is in a satisfactory state, or whether it should be altered on some of the points to which reference has been made, is a question well worthy of consideration. I should, however, be transgressing the ruling of the Chair, and making unjustifiable demands on the time of the Committee, if I were to take this opportunity to criticise or to comment upon the law. Take only one instance out of a number mentioned by my hon. Friend. The question whether or not the sum charged for the plates affixed to every cab is excessive, and whether the best means of applying the sums so raised is to put it in the Police Fund, is worthy of discussion. But, as the law now stands, the Home Secretary has no more discretion in the matter than has any clerk in the Civil Service. The law requires the plates to be taken out and directs the application of the money. As to licences, my hon. Friend has touched a point on which I agree, that the Home Secretary has a certain amount of administrative control. I have already expressed the opinion that, as far as I have the means of forming a judgment, there is an excess in the number of licences granted to drivers. One, at any rate, of the morals of the unfortunate dispute at present prevailing in the streets of the Metropolis is that we are over supplied with cabs, and still more over supplied with drivers. The House must remember that it is a very great hardship to the individual who has taken out a licence, which only lasts 12 months, to be refused a renewal of that which is practically his working capital; and although we may hold abstractly the opinion that there is an excessive supply of drivers, still, when we come to apply that opinion to concrete cases by refusing to particular individuals the means of continuing to earn their livelihood, the House will perceive that the jurisdiction should be exercised with the greatest delicacy and indulgence. I have already taken steps, and will take steps, to see whether the granting of new licences may not be subjected to greater restrictions. My hon. Friend says that if I regulate the fares to be paid by the public, I ought equally to regulate the price to be paid by the driver to the proprietor of the cab. No such power exists in the law, and I think that the House would think twice, or thrice, before it entrusted any Government Department with the responsibility of saying, as between the persons supplying cabs on the one side and the persons demanding cabs as drivers on the other, what shall regulate the price other than the state of the market. I should be sorry to be intrusted with any such responsibility. The question of the admission of privileged cabs into railway yards is a matter on which I have not been idle. I issued a Circular more than a year ago to the Companies having termini in London asking a number of questions. I received replies from all of them, and the result of my consideration is that I am not prepared to say that a strong case has been made out in favour of the abandonment or of the substantial modification of the existing system. Both systems have prevailed. At some railway termini—I think Waterloo, for example—the Railway Company admit unprivileged cabs on payment of 1d. or some other small sum. The other Railway Companies have the cabs more or less under their own control, because they think that in that way they can better meet the necessities and convenience of those who travel by their trains. This is one of the matters on which experience is the best guide. The convenience of the public is, after all, the main thing we have to consider, and so far as the public are concerned I have never heard any complaint from any quarter as to the system that prevails. I am sorry that my hon. Friend should have spoken of the tyranny of the police in the regulation of cabmen and the regulation of traffic. I must, as the person responsible for the regulation of traffic, enter my strong protest.

Mr. LOUGH: I did not say the regulation of traffic. I said that the conduct of the police towards the cabbies was tyrannous.

Mr. ASQUITH: That is a charge that ought not to be made without some attempt to substantiate it. It is the first time I have ever heard such a charge inside or outside the House levelled against the police. Members of the House have an intimate knowledge of the cabmen of London, and are as good judges as anyone of the conduct of the police in the regulation of traffic. They will agree with me that the conduct of the Metropolitan Police in dealing with the cab and omnibus drivers is a model to the police of any country. I very much regret that my hon. Friend should have made such a grave and ill-considered charge. The question whether or not there is a sufficient number of cab-stands is one of a difficult character. I do not think it is fair to say that those cab-stands in existence are appendages to public-houses. In this part of the town, at any rate, that is not the case. With regard to the subject as a whole, the Committee will agree with me that this is a very difficult and delicate industry to regulate, and that it is very difficult to draw a line as to what the State may or may not do in this matter. I deeply regret the unfortunate dispute, and cannot help hoping that by reasonable counsels the comparatively small points of difference may be accommodated. At the same time, as far as I am able to judge—and my opinion is not worth more than that of any intelligent observer—the root of the difficulty is that we have an over-supply of cabs and of drivers, and that the economic conditions correspond with what, in other instances, we would call over-production. It is probably only by a reduction in the number of cabs and of drivers that demand and supply will be equalised, and reasonable terms as regards a livelihood of those engaged in the industry can be secured. Whatever efforts can reasonably be made by the Home Office, or those under its control, for the purpose of bringing about a better understanding between the cabdrivers and their employers shall certainly be made, and so far as the point raised by my hon. Friend—which represented the real grievance—can be dealt with, I can assure him that I shall not relax my attention, but will endeavour so far as I can to bring about a more satisfactory state of things. I think that I cannot usefully occupy the time of the House longer, for, after all, the main ground of the hon. Member's contention was, that the law as it stands is defective, and not the administration of the law.

MR. LOUGH said, that he could not withdraw his Amendment unless the Home Secretary promised something more. Would he appoint a Committee to consider the subject? Cab strikes were occurring every three years, and some means ought to be taken to prevent their recurrence. The promises of the right hon. Gentleman, as far as related to licences, were so far satisfactory, but he thought that some method of dealing with the whole subject in a humane and generous way as between employers and employed might be arrived at. Unless some more satisfactory statement were made on behalf of the Goverment, he should feel bound to press the Motion to a Division.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, that he was exceedingly sorry to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary that he was not disposed to grant an inquiry into the incidents of the cabdriving trade by a Committee of that House. But if the right hon. Gentleman did not see his way to the appointment of such Committee, he ought to consider seriously whether he could not concede to the fully unanimous request of the men that the control of the vehicular traffic of the streets should be transferred from the Home Office to some more Representative Body. It required greater care than the Home Secretary or the police could possibly hope to give it. The Home Secretary started by saying that it was exceedingly difficult to exercise control in such a way as to minimise to any appreciable extent the over-supply of cabs. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would exercise his control in such a manner as to prevent the indiscriminate granting of licences to youths—inexperienced drivers. One saw inexperienced men every day in charge of hansom cabs, and occasionally four-wheelers. On this subject he did not take the altogether narrow view of the cabman themselves, but asked the House to view the question from the point of view of the ordinary foot passenger. Some means ought to be devised of preventing the difficulties and dangers which were caused by this excess of vehicles. The excessive number of cabmen plying for hire was a danger not only to the public generally, but to the fares whom they all rushed to secure, and steps ought to be taken to abate the nuisance. The present strike proved that there were 15,000 licences issued to cabdrivers, many of whom had to be in the streets from 14 to 18 hours a day, and sometimes cruelly overworked their horses in search of fares that never came, in consequence of their being too many cabs on the stands. The right hon. Gentleman said that there was some difficulty in interfering with the freedom of contract between cabdrivers and their employers; but in the case of omnibuses, where the employed were paid a fixed daily or weekly wage, the matter settled itself, because both parties were equally interested in preventing too many omnibuses being sent out. In the case of cabs, however, it was different, because the cabowner let his cab out for a fixed sum, and the cabdriver had to remain in the streets many hours in order to pay his employer's charge and to make a living for himself. Why should not the cabdriver have some immunity from imposition by the cabowner, which the law afforded to the public against a cabdriver or an omnibus driver? The present precarious system of remuneration to the cabdrivers was unfair, and he did not see why, as the outcome of the Committee of Inquiry, there should not be some daily fixed wage, as in Berlin and other places on the Continent.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Home Secretary is only responsible on this Vote for his own acts. The hon. Member is now digressing.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, he was surprised that the Home Secretary had not received complaints as to the question of privileged cabs in railway stations. The Home Secretary affected a simplicity as to the treatment of cabmen by the London police that some Judges affected in relation to horses which they frequently backed and ballet dancers whom they frequently went to see. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] It was a standing joke at Marlborough Street, Bow Street, and every other London Police Court that if there were 40 cabmen charged with obstruction or——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out again that the Home Secretary is not responsible for that, but only for his own administration.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, that the right hon. Gentleman was certainly reponsible for the conduct of the police, and if he were to visit a police court in which 40 cases against cabmen were heard he would find that not one of them escaped fine or imprisonment. The policemen were always listened to, and the poor cabman was always put away. Cabmen ought to be taken, not before a Criminal Court, where the cabmen and the police were continually at loggerheads, but should be subject to a Civil Court. Why should not the right hon. Gentleman appoint a Committee of Inquiry, which might bring about such a result? The Home Secretary was quite aware that there existed in London a body which ought to undertake the settlement and satisfactory management not only of the vehicular traffic of the streets of London, but could be constituted a Civil Court of Appeal, by means of which cabmen and the police would be prevented from being at loggerheads. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman grant the request of the cabmen, and put the whole of the vehicular traffic under the management of the London County Council? [*Cries of* "Oh!"] If the London County Council had the management of more public vehicles they would cease to be centres of contagion, and the perfunctory way in which they were now controlled would be brought to an end. He appealed to the Home Secretary to grant a Committee of Inquiry so that, among other things, the London streets might be saved from overcrowding by cabs, which were one-third too many in number; and from a system by which cabmen were starved and had to resort to intimidation because their earnings did not average all the year round the wages of a scavenger. There were one-third more cabs in London than could earn a living for masters and men; and when an appeal was made to Parliament for assistance in the matter it seemed like the very essence of incompetence, not to say ignorance, helplessness, and hopelessness, for a public official to admit that he had no power to do anything for cabby in his distress. If that was the only answer the Home Secretary had to give the cabmen who appealed to him, the sooner he got rid of a difficulty he would not attempt to grapple with, and let London's Municipal Council do what every other Municipality was doing, the better it would be for the cabman and the public he served.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he thought that the present system connected with cabs in London was thoroughly bad, and the House was clearly responsible for it. Considering the strike that was going on, his hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Lough) was justified in asking for the appointment of a Committee. But why were they called upon to take up the time of the House in a discussion on the question of cabs? In Northampton the cabs were managed under the supervision of the inhabitants of the town. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen laughed; but was it, or was it not, a local matter, this question of cabs in London? If it was, surely the Imperial Parliament ought not to be occupied with a subject which should be relegated to the County Council. He trusted that his hon. Friend would go to a Division if the Home Secretary would not consent to send the matter to a Committee.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he thought that the subject did not require a Committee, but that the Home Secretary was competent to deal with it. If a Division were taken, there ought to be a very distinct understanding as to what the functions of the proposed Committee were to be. He gathered that the Home Secretary was quite willing to deal with the matter of regulating the number of cabstands and shelters in London; but the question of licences stood in a totally different position. He, for one, was strongly opposed to the creation of monopolies either in the interests of the workmen or employers, and he should protest against any attempt on the part of the Home Secretary or any private Member to create a monopoly for the benefit of one class or another. It might be a very fair question for the Home Secretary to consider whether any new licences should be granted for some time or otherwise, but he did not see how, when a workman had passed his examination, so to speak, and had proved his competency to manage a cab in the streets of London, the Home Secretary could in justice refuse the renewal of his licence. He hoped that if they divided on the question some clear statement would be made as to the issue upon which the Division was to take place. If it was to be a Division on the appointment of a Committee to have the power of considering the points in dispute between the cabdriver and the cabowner in the present strike, then he protested against it. He was wholly opposed to Parliament interfering in any way in industrial disputes between employers and employed. He as a workman thought that the workmen were quite competent to protect themselves. If they were permitted the freedom of combination, if no restrictions were placed in the way of their fairly combining and organising for the protection of their labour, he strongly reprobated any interference on the part of Parliament between capital and labour in any industrial conflicts. Therefore, he said that, if the Committee was going to a Division on the point, there ought to be a clear understanding as to the issue on which such a Division was to be taken.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds.) said, he did not think it would be necessary to go to a Division. His hon. Friend (Mr. Fenwick) had made very clear to the House the difficulties that might arise from a too wide extension of the scope of an inquiry on the subject; but if those hon. Members who were interested in the subject would be satisfied with an inquiry by a small Departmental Committee to be presided over by himself—as this was a subject in which he took some interest—and containing one or two advisers from outside, he thought such a Committee might come to a decision on many of the points which had been referred to.

Mr. LOUGH said, he would be happy to accept his hon. Friend's proposal, provided that the proposed Committee was strengthened as much as possible from outside.

*Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, the Committee would not be confined to members of the Home Office.

Mr. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, it was not the cabdrivers and the cabowners who were alone interested in this matter. The public were very much interested in it also. It was a great inconvenience to the public to have too many cabs, as they restricted other traffic, and wore the roads unnecessarily. He desired to see the drivers have a living wage. They were a very hard-working and a very honest class of men. Those who happened to leave things in cabs were pretty safe if they went to Scotland Yard next morning to find the lost article deposited there. He thought that in the interest of the public it was desirable that an inquiry should take place. He did not wish to see licences taken away from any of the existing drivers, but he thought it would be wise that when licences were issued the authorities should take into account the interests of the public.

Captain BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield) said, he hoped that the Committee of Inquiry would consider the interests of the large area outside the London County Council district as well as the area within the district.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

### Siam.

*Mr. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport) said, he wished to raise once more the question of Siam. He thought that the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) would admit that he had no desire whatever, in raising the question again, to do anything to embarrass the Government or to impede the course of any negotiations that might be passing between the Government of this country and the French Government. He thought, however, that where so much was at stake, and where the interests of this country, both commercial and political, were as large as they were in the case of Siam, the House had a right to press for information from the Executive Government. If the interest that was felt in Siam in this country was not very great or absorbing it must be remembered that in the distant regions of the far East the prestige of Great Britain and the action of Her Majesty's Government in dealing with the question were matters of the most vital concern, and that the Siamese question, which could scarcely draw together a decent audience in the House of Commons, affected not merely the livelihood of thousands of British citizens, but even the prestige of the Empire. In that part of the world an impression undoubtedly prevailed that the interests of Great Britain had been somewhat imperfectly safeguarded, and that France had been permitted with too little protest to pursue a very high-handed policy of aggression towards a feeble State; and unless some statement were made to that country by Her Majesty's Government indicating what British interests were and the point beyond which those interests would not permit of any further advance, he could not help entertaining the fear that the appetite which, in the French proverb, grew by eating might not be satisfied until it had acquired some further spoil in that part of the world. He did not desire to re-open on this occasion any of the aspects of the question which might be considered past and over, but would only call the attention of the House to those portions of it still remaining unsettled. First came the question of the Papers which had been promised to the House, connected with which was the continued occupation of Chantaboon by the French. The House had waited now for some eight or ten months for those Papers, and was still without any information as to the communications which had passed between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the French Government, although extracts from the Despatches were read out nearly a year ago by French Ministers in the Chamber. No information had been afforded as to the proceedings of the French at Bangkok, the blockade, or the State on the Upper Mekong; and, lastly, no Papers had been produced as to any negotiations with other Governments as to future guarantees in reference to Siam. In that state of matters, Members on both sides of the House were anxious to know how Her Majesty's Government had been protecting the interests and conducting the affairs of this country in that part of the East. They were quite willing to believe that the interests of the country were safe in the hands of the Government, and that they had conducted the negotiations with firmness and credit; but surely the time had arrived when the House could legitimately ask for some justification of that popular feeling in their favour. Of course, he could quite appreciate the reasons given by the Under Secretary of State to the House for not producing the Papers. He had told them the Papers were being withheld until the one outstanding point between the French and Siamese Governments had been disposed of, that point being the trial of a Siamese official, Pra Yot, who was accused of being concerned in the alleged massacre of a French Inspector of Militia and his Annamite escort in a district east of the Mekong River. They had been told more than once by the hon. Gentleman that on the completion of that trial they might expect the immediate evacuation of Chantaboon by the French troops. The first trial had taken place, and the case against the alleged culprit had completely broken down, since it had turned out that the alleged massacre was a collision which had occurred under easily intelligible circumstances, that the firing had initiated with the French, and that Pra Yot had only acted in self-defence. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Court at Bangkok had found him free from blame on all counts of the indictment brought against him. But under the terms of the Convention, the French seemed to have contemplated such an issue, and had reserved to themselves the right of judging whether the sentences were adequate, and of demanding a second trial before a mixed Court, the composition of which they should themselves fix. He would only say, as the matter was pending before the second tribunal, that they would await its proceedings and verdict with considerable interest. Next, turning to the occupation of Chantaboon, which was closely connected with this question, hon. Members were aware, no doubt, that that place was a port on one of the principal rivers of Siam and the means of communication between the provinces of Angkor and Battambong and the foreign world. That port was occupied by the French in the course of their aggressive proceedings last year, and he had then pointed out to his right hon. Friend the serious character of that occupation without avail. But he thought the right hon. Gentleman had since seen reason to change his opinion in the matter. The French occupation of Chantaboon had continued ever since; they had fortified their position, and had maintained there Franco-Annamite troops. But in the Convention their continued occupation of the place had distinctly been made contingent on the fulfilment of two conditions—namely, the complete and peaceable evacuation by Siam of the territory beyond the Mekong, of the famous 16 miles strip on the banks of that river, and of the above-named inland provinces; and, secondly, the completion of the trial of Pra Yot. Those conditions had been faithfully carried out by the Siamese Government—nobody, even the strongest partisans of the French, could say the contrary. That had been recognised on several occasions by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and only one interpretation could be placed on the language which had been held. Without drawing any inferences, he would quote the statement made by the hon. Gentleman in that House on the 16th of February last, that—

> "Most explicit assurances had been received from the French that they were most desirous of leaving Chantaboon at the earliest opportunity and that they would not remain there a day after the engagements of Siam had been performed."

On two occasions since the hon. Gentleman had repeated those statements, and they had been supported by the authority of the Prime Minister himself. He called attention to the clearness of those words, because in a few days' or weeks' time the second trial would be completed, when he hoped that the French, being mindful of the pledge they had given, would voluntarily terminate an occupation which was a menace to Siam as long as it lasted. It was well to recall those statements, lest there should be any tardiness on the part of the French Government to remember the obligations imposed upon them, according to the repeated statements in both Houses of Parliament. He would next refer to the terms of the Commercial Treaty to be negotiated between France and Siam. In the 5th Article of the Treaty which was concluded last October it was stipulated that within six months of that time negotiations should be opened between the Siamese and French Governments, with a view to the regulation of the Customs and the commercial *régime* to be established for traders in the Provinces of Battambong and Angkor, and in the 16 miles strip on the Mekong. Negotiations apparently had taken place in Paris; but, of course, he would not press for information which either it was not in the power of the Government to give, or which it would be inopportune to give at the present stage; but the House had a right to demand that when this new Commercial Treaty had been concluded between France and Siam they should be informed that it contained no differential provisions—that no advantages would be conceded to French subjects or traders in Provinces which were admitted by France to remain still an integral portion of the Siamese dominions and where British trade had at least an equal right. In accordance with the Most Favoured Nation Clause in the existing Treaty between England and Siam, it should be distinctly stated in the agreements about to be entered into that no advantage would accrue to French traders or subjects under the new Convention which would not be equally enjoyed by British subjects and traders. It would indeed be an intolerable thing if Siam, having already been compelled under the pressure of superior force to sign away so large a portion of her political integrity and independence, were now a year afterwards to be cozened into a still further surrender of her commercial rights, and still more so if she were compelled to take that course in the interest of a Power which, in spite of its contiguity and its geographical advantages, had never succeeded in building up any solid trade with Siam at all, and to the detriment of another Power—Great Britain—the integrity and industry of whose merchants had already obtained for them 90 per cent. of the total trade in the chief ports. Another point in connection with this matter was that under Clause 8 of the same Treaty the French Government reserved to itself the right to establish Consulates at Korat and Nan. The former place was the terminus of a railway at present being constructed by English engineers for about 160 miles from Bangkok, and was the centre of a considerable trade. Nan was a good deal further north, and was a place where the foreign trade was entirely British or Indian. Neither at Korat nor at Nan would a single article of French manufacture be found. In those centres and districts, the foreign supply was exclusively English and Anglo-Indian. He failed to understand, in those circumstances, what particular purpose French Consuls were to serve when they got there. He did not wish to discuss that matter, but merely to point out that the French had obtained those advantages, and that in fact Consuls had already started for Korat and Nan. On a previous occasion he had asked whether, as French Consuls had been appointed to places where there was no French trade, English Consuls should not also be appointed, but had received no answer. He would again, therefore, ask whether it was not desirable that we should have representatives in those places. The next question was with regard to the so-called "buffer State." At an early stage it was agreed that to avoid friction and the danger of personal collision which might arise from the geographical contact of two such Powers as France and Great Britain in those remote parts of the world, it would be desirable to constitute an intermediate or buffer State between them. The Protocol signed on the subject by Lord Dufferin and the French Minister had been already presented to the House. The Under Secretary had informed them that climatic obstacles (which anyone acquainted with the country would appreciate) had hitherto prevented the despatch of a British Commission to examine topographically the territory in question. It had therefore been postponed until the autumn. A little more information, however, was required on that point. The French Commission had been appointed, and had started, and the names of the Commissioners were known, among them being M. Paris, the energetic representative of France at Bangkok. The Committee ought to know when our Commissioners were to start, and the instructions upon which they were to act. Were they to appear in the Papers which the hon. Gentleman had promised to present? For his own part, he did not attach so much importance to this so-called "buffer State" on the Upper Mekong as some people were disposed to give to it. The French Chauvinist feeling had been worked up to a great state of excitement and apprehension in regard to it; but, in his opinion, a vindication of the indisputable British territorial rights—which were incapable of dispute by the French Government — on both banks of the Upper Mekong River would be of more advantage to British interests, and a greater safeguard for the transit of commerce with the South-Western Provinces of China than any buffer-State which could be constituted by diplomatic arrangement. The Government, of course, knew better than anyone else whether such a buffer State was advisable or necessary; but they should at least see that it was what it pretended to be. It must not be a "neutral zone," but a neutral State. A neutral zone would become merely an Alsatia into which all the dacoits, thieves, and brigands from the surrounding States would flock; but the very name neutral "State" postulated the exercise of some executive authority. *Ex hypothesi* such a State could not be either French or English, because it would separate the two Powers; neither could it be Siamese, because Siam had given up the whole of her territory on the left bank of the river. Her Majesty's Government should see, therefore, that the discharge of the elementary duties of administration in this State was placed in competent hands. Perhaps the Government were in a position to give the Committee information on a subject germane to this—the Anglo-Chinese Convention which had been concluded relating to the frontiers of Burmah. Its main features had appeared in the Press; but he had been told, in answer to a question, that until the Despatches arrived at Pekin, Her Majesty's Government were not in a position to give any information upon the subject. He believed the Convention included the cession to China of the important State of Kiang Hung; and, inasmuch as that abutted on the Mekong River, where the buffer State would have to be carved out, this was a matter obviously which was closely allied with the question now under discussion, and the Committee was entitled to be informed by Her Majesty's Government what *quid pro quo* they had received for so important a concession. Therefore, he would ask whether the Papers to be presented would relate to the Convention in regard to the Burmese frontiers as well as to affairs in Siam? He next desired to state what was the real danger that lay before Siam. He had no desire to wound the susceptibilities of Frenchmen, and hoped he had never spoken or written in the course of this controversy a word transgressing the limits of respect for a great neighbouring Power or going beyond the bounds of fair criticism. But it could not be gainsaid that the French Colonial eye (and he was speaking of what he had himself seen) was directed upon the Menam Valley and territories at present belonging to Siam with a glance in which there was more of longing than of love. They had already made the Mekong Valley their washpot. Over the rest of Siam they wanted to cast out their shoe. He did not say that any such aggressive views were encouraged on the Quai d'Orsay, and indeed they were frankly inconsistent with the pledges given by the French Government. But a long course of Eastern experience had taught us that a central Government, however honourable its intentions and desires, was not always capable of exercising perfect control over imperious pro-Consuls at a distance from headquarters or even of restraining over-active subordinates operating upon an out-of-the-way frontier. The realisation of any such scheme as a French occupation of the Menam Valley was a prospect which no British Government could tolerate for a moment. Whatever guarantees might be given it would involve the total extinction of an important branch of British trade upon which the wealth and commerce of Singapore largely depended. Further, it would constitute a serious political danger to our Indian Empire to have a foreign Power established in the Meinam Valley adjoining our territories and the Provinces of Lower and Upper Burmah. Such a result would impose distressing burdens upon our Indian finances and would constitute a very serious peril to our Indian Empire. Unless some clear warning were given by Her Majesty's Government to the French of the great and legitimate interest which this country took in the matter it was quite possible we might wake up any day to find that such a consummation had taken place and that Siam had been compelled or persuaded by a Power which she could not resist to sign away the last shreds of her political and territorial autonomy. There was only one way by which that issue could be averted. Over and over again the French Government had protested its desire to respect the integrity of Siam, and had explained its recent aggression as the vindication of historic claims, and as being divorced from any ambitions of ulterior absorption. For our part, he imagined that the desire of the British Government to respect the independence of Siam was absolutely beyond cavil or suspicion. That being so, one was tempted to inquire what objection there could possibly be to the British Government inviting and the French Government giving a guarantee of the future integrity of Siam. Such a guarantee, he should say, the respective Governments ought not only to be willing to reciprocate, but to initiate. If there should be any disinclination on the part of the French Government to enter into such an arrangement, colour would be at once given to those suggestions and suspicions as to their ultimate aims and objects and intentions, in regard to which such great indignation was expressed when they were hinted at. He was convinced that only by such a guarantee could the future independence of Siam be assured. If she were protected by her two great neighbours on the east and west, and so rendered free from the danger of further territorial loss, she would then be free to develop the stability which the country now lacked. Siam was a country which possessed very considerable resources. The country had a patient and intelligent population, and there was a public spirit in its Sovereign and its leading men; and it was quite possible, under favourable conditions, for Siam to gain a creditable position among independent nations. But without the protection of such a guarantee as he had described, it was to be feared that Siam would be too apprehensive of the disasters that might await her to work out her own salvation, thet she would be swayed first in one direction and then in another, and would be likely to yield to the temptation of purchasing support by granting still further concessions to whichever she might conceive to be the stronger party. It could not be too strongly impressed upon the Committee that the real buffer State between Great Britain and France in the far East could not be an artificial strip of jungle which was to be carved out from a comparatively unknown and desolate country in a remote angle of the Upper Mekong. Siam itself must remain the real buffer State. It was no good making a sham buffer State in the north-east whilst the real buffer State in the south-east was being sapped and undermined. It would be far better that the sham buffer State in the north-east should be a failure than that the genuine buffer State in the south-east should be a phantom. They waited with great interest for any information that could be given to them on this subject. He hoped that the Government were thoroughly alive to the great Imperial importance of this question, and he should be glad to know whether, in their negotiations with France, they had included proposals for a guarantee of the future independence of Siam, for such a guarantee was of the highest importance as being likely to ensure good relations in the future between France and Great Britain in the East.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) said that, with regard to the Anglo-Chinese Convention, he was still not sure that it had reached Pekin. Therefore, although there possibly might be no harm in making some statement with reference to the matter, he thought, on the whole, it would be safer to defer any observations which he might have to make until the time when they would be quite certain that the actual terms of the Convention were in the hands of the Chinese Government. He found no fault with the hon. Member for having raised the Siamese question, and of course he did not wish to detract from the importance of the question to the Imperial interests of this country. The hon. Member had a great deal of knowledge on this subject, which nobody could dispute, and felt strongly upon it, and there was a clearness and attractiveness in his way of presenting his case which anyone might envy. But, of course, in discussing this question the hon. Member had exercised a freedom which could hardly be exercised to the same extent by a Member of the Government. He would, however, deal with the points raised by the hon. Member as far as he could, and, first of all, he had to say that the whole question of the relations between Siam and France remained not absolutely, but practically, in much the same state as it was in when he last discussed it in the House. It was, therefore, not possible for him to add much to what he had previously stated. The question of the buffer State was one which it was arranged from the beginning could not be decided until the delimitation of the frontiers should have been finished. He saw no reason to suppose that the names of the British Commissioners or their instructions would be withheld from Parliament. Even if the French Commissioners had been named and even if they had started, the arrangement that had been made was a bilateral arrangement, and it was not possible for the question of the constitution of the buffer State to make any real progress until the delimitation of the frontiers should have been undertaken on the one side as well as on the other. As to the reported appointment of French Consuls in Siam, he had to say that he was not certain that there had been two appointments. One Consul, however, had been appointed to serve at Korat, but had not yet arrived there. The Government had in view the appointment of a British Consul at Korat and would not lose sight of the matter. With regard to the Commercial Treaty, he would only observe that so far as the Government knew, no commercial provisions had yet been agreed upon between France and Siam. This country, of course, disliked intensely having differential duties imposed against its trade in any part of the world. In making Treaties with other countries it had not been our policy to ask for special trade advantages, but we strongly objected to arrangements between other countries under which our trade could not have fair play in foreign markets. Under the treaty with Siam we had a Most Favoured Nation Clause, and not only this Government, but any Government, would be quite certain to make use of its right under that clause should any advantages be given by Siam to any third country which could in any way conflict with British interests. Turning now to the larger and more general question, he would recall the Committee's attention to the exact state of things. There was not long ago a dispute between France and Siam, which at one period assumed a very threatening aspect, and the result was that a Convention was signed between France and Siam, and certain stipulations were made between them. The position taken up by the French Government had always been that it was their desire to have the stipulations of that Convention fully carried out on both sides. The Siamese Government had taken up the same position, and the French Government had declared from the beginning that it was necessary that the stipulations of that Convention should be carried out on both sides before they could enter upon any fresh discussion. He would not discuss the merits of the Convention and the events that preceded it, but it was obvious that, having arrived at that point, the thing which the Government had a right to look forward to was the fulfilment by Siam and France of the stipulations which they had respectively agreed to under the Convention. But those stipulations had not yet all been fulfilled, though the larger part of them had been fulfilled on the Siamese side. There still remained the question of the trial. One stage had been completed, but under the Convention the right was expressly reserved to the French Government to have a new trial should the first trial not be satisfactory. That right they were determined to exercise; and Papers had been withheld from the House because the desire of the British Government had been that the stipulations on both sides of the Convention should be carried out in a friendly and satisfactory spirit. It might be that Papers might now be published without endangering the chance of a satisfactory settlement, but the Government thought that having waited so long, and as only a small point now remained to be settled, it would be a pity to do anything to prejudice a satisfactory issue. He admitted that Papers could not be withheld from the House very much longer. If the proceedings in connection with what remained of the Convention were unexpectedly to be prolonged it would not be fair to the House to withhold the Papers that had been promised. Although the Government had borne that in mind, and had already begun to consider whether they ought not to place the House in a position to review the facts of the case by publishing Papers, the present moment was not one in which he could make any definite statement to the House upon the matter. He would remind the House that there had been a change of Government in France, and it would be most unreasonable that any step towards the publication of Papers should be taken until there had been some friendly communication between the Governments of the two countries. It was not yet known what the new French Government would be, but the Government relied upon it that, in accordance with the traditions of the past of that great country, whatever the new French Government might be, it would take up the thread of the negotiations where they had been left in a friendly spirit. Her Majesty's Government had already demonstrated freely during the last year or more that they were most ready to reciprocate any friendly spirit shown on the other side, and that being so, he hoped the Committee would understand that, although the publication of the Papers had been inconveniently long delayed, it was not possible for him to make any definite statement with regard to them while political affairs in France remained in their present state of uncertainty. He could only give his hon. Friend the assurance that the matter should not be left much longer in its present state. The Government were anxious to see the stipulations of the Convention carried out on both sides, and that there should be a clear understanding arrived at between all parties which would prevent not only the risk of any danger or serious damage to the interests of any of the parties concerned, but might also avert for many future years the risk of any friction between them.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, so much had transpired that afternoon to justify the pressure he had repeatedly put on Her Majesty's Government, that he hoped he might be allowed to add a few observations to the remarkably able statement they had heard from the hon. Member for Southport. The Committee would recollect that just two months had elapsed since he urged the production of Papers, but no step had yet been taken by the Government to publish the Blue Book, while the French Yellow Book had been published some time without regard to the arguments of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. This was not as it should be, seeing that the people of Great Britain had far greater interest in the matter, commercial and material, than had the people of France, and they should not be left without information by the Government. He assured the Government that until the Papers were produced and Members saw what the proceedings on the British side had been, there would be reasonable apprehension that British interests, material and commercial, had not been safeguarded. He earnestly commended to the Committee what had been said by the Member for Southport. A small buffer State in the north-east corner of Siam might be of some value. He did not dispute that, but the true buffer State in south-eastern Asia between France and England was Siam itself. That the French had cast longing eyes of cupidity not only on Bangkok, but also on the Valley of the Mekong and the Valley of the Menam, had been known for the last 10 or 20 years to every Anglo-Indian statesman, and unless measures were taken we would wake up to find that besides having a Russian frontier on the west of India we had a French frontier on the east. That would be a most dangerous thing for the people of India. The true and only remedy was that pointed out by the hon. Member for Southport—namely, that France should come to an understanding with England to preserve the independence of what remained of Siam after the outrageous spoliation to which the country had recently been subjected. The time had come when we must speak out in these matters. He maintained that if the British Government was firm and the French Government was honest, a joint guarantee of the independence of Siam would be arrived at. He was bound in charity as well as in policy to assume that the French Government was honest, and he hoped he might assume that the British Government, even in the hands of Her Majesty's present Ministers, would be firm.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) said, he rose to point out that it was necessary that the Government should get the Vote to-night, and he hoped hon. Members would have that fact in view during the short time that still remained to the House.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said, he did not quite understand the statement which the right hon. Gentleman made. At 20 minutes past 6 o'clock he coolly got up and told them that this money must be granted to-night without producing a single reason to support it. He (Mr. Chaplin) had been informed by hon. Friends who had experience in the matter that there was no reason whatever why the Vote should be obtained to-night. But if the necessity existed the fault rested with the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues, who had had the whole Session before them, and who might have put the Vote down on any day during the week. He doubted whether this attempt to hurry the Vote through without necessary discussion would be successful. He said "attempt," because he questioned whether, under the circumstances, the Closure would be allowed. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members forgot that there were distinct Rules regulating the application of the Closure. The rights of the minority were not to be infringed, and though he did not presume to say what course the Chairman would take, it was at least open to doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman would be justified in saying that the Debate should be stopped to-night. That would be a very strong order indeed. The fault rested entirely with the Government, of whom the House had had the same unfortunate experience on more than one occasion. Last Session they had announced that they would close the discussion of a Vote on Account at a few hours' notice, and this Session they were depriving Members of one of their oldest privileges in order that they might prosecute other business to which, no doubt, they attached great importance, but to which they could not expect the House of Commons to attach similar importance. He (Mr. Chaplin) desired to call attention to a most important subject in regard to which a Notice had been put on the Paper on the previous night.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he had two Notices on the Paper before that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, with regard to Newfoundland. He wished to ask whether Her Majesty's Government would see that a proper opportunity of deciding Election Petitions was afforded in Newfoundland before any appeal to the country was made? because, so far as he could make out, he believed the late Government of that colony desired to whitewash themselves by a new election. There was a feeling in the colony that a Dissolution might yet be rushed by the Party in power if the Governor General gave way, and did not stop it until after the Law Courts had decided on the Election Petitions. He also wished to know whether the Colonial Office were attempting to move the Foreign Office to get the question affecting the French shore settled by the French Government? He moved to reduce the vote by £10 in order to emphasise the questions he had raised.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not necessary to move in order to draw attention to these matters.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I am aware of that, but I do move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £6,500, for the Colonial Office, be reduced by £10."—(*Mr. A. C. Morton.*)

SIR F. EVANS (Southampton) said, he was sorry that attacks should be made in the House against gentlemen who were not able to reply for themselves. The hon. Member (Mr. Morton) said the late Government of Newfoundland asked for a Dissolution in order that they might get themselves whitewashed. He (Sir F. Evans) demurred to that statement. There was nothing to prove what the motives of these gentlemen in asking for a Dissolution were. Everyone acquainted with Newfoundland must know that the present state of affairs had no precedent in the history of the colony. The peculiar circumstances under which the demand for a Dissolution occurred would not allow of an explanation in the brief space of time at the disposal of the Government in the present Sitting. The position he held in regard to Newfoundland was such that it might be his duty at a later stage to bring the whole question under the notice of the House, but it was impossible to do that in the few moments now at his disposal. He, therefore, contented himself with asking the House not to accept the statement in which the hon. Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton) attributed *mala fides* to the late Government of Newfoundland. As to the other question raised by the hon. Member, it was not possible to settle it until the Colonial Government had come to a decision as to the legislation to be passed by the Colonial Parliament.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I wish to reply to the two points raised by my hon. Friend (Mr. A. C. Morton). As regards the French Treaty shore, that is a matter to which already a great deal of attention has been given, and it has always been the object of the English Government to come to some arrangement with the French Government in order that this very intricate question may be settled. No effort will certainly be spared by the English Government to put an end to any difficulties that may occur. I should like to say this with regard to the Treaty shore, that very great forbearance has been shown on both sides, on the part of the French naval officers especially, and on the part of our officers, and I think it very creditable to both parties that so few disputes have arisen. As to the magisterial work, all the information I have been able to obtain is that, as far as they have acted as Newfoundland Magistrates, their conduct has given the utmost satisfaction. With reference to the Constitutional crisis which unfortunately is now going on in Newfoundland, it is quite impossible for me to give an answer to a hypothetical question. My hon. Friend wants to know what we are going to do under certain suppositious circumstances. Though, of course, we have to consider carefully all the different points of view, and although to a certain extent we have made up our minds as to what we propose to do, it is impossible to state what we shall do in circumstances which have not arisen. I think my hon. Friend behind me (Sir F. Evans) was justified in entering his protest against the assumption of my hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough (Mr. A. C. Morton), that the action of the late Government in Newfoundland was founded on bad motives. Apart altogether from escaping the results of the corruption that may have taken place at the election, there are many reasons which may have made a Dissolution at that time an advantage instead of a disadvantage. At the same time, the Governor, acting in the exercise of his discretion, refused a Dissolution, accepted the resignation of the late Government, and has now a new Government in Office. If a question respecting Dissolution arises he will, no doubt, communicate with us, but he will also act under the power which is given to him by the Constitution.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he was obliged to the Under Secretary for his statement, but he did not withdraw a word he had said about the late Newfoundland Government.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that on Vote 8 he wished to ask a question respecting the very important point of the appointment of practical men as Railway Sub-Inspectors.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he had given notice of his intention to call attention to a very important matter on the Colonial Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then I call upon the hon. and gallant Member.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he wished to draw attention to the subsidies paid by some of the Crown Colonies to foreign mail steamers for carrying British mails. He had received a very unsatisfactory answer to a question he had put to the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) on the subject. The hon. Gentleman had admitted that it was the case that the Crown Colony of Mauritius paid a subsidy of something like £6,000 a year to the French Messageries Maritimes for carrying mails to and from the colony, but had said that Her Majesty's Government were practically powerless to interfere with this very objectionable arrangement. He (Admiral Field) thought it was time to speak out against this subsidising of foreign mail steamers with British money. Our shipping interests were seriously interfered with now by the bounty-fed shipping of France. Another foreign steamship company—a German line—was also subsidised to carry the mails to the Falkland Islands. It was monstrous that this state of things should continue. When he had appealed to the Under Secretary (Mr. S. Buxton) for any instance in which a foreign Government subsidised a British Company for carrying mails, the hon. Gentleman had replied that the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company were subsidised for carrying mails from Calais. The hon. Gentleman's answer was not very candid, because the conditions imposed by the French Government in granting that subsidy was that the steamers should carry the French flag, be commanded by French officers, and be manned by French crews.

MR. S. BUXTON was understood to explain that he had given an incorrect answer in consequence of a pure misunderstanding as to the question. He had had no intention of deceiving the hon. and gallant Gentleman.

ADMIRAL FIELD said, he, of course, accepted the hon. Gentleman's statement, but he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government would impose similar conditions in reference to the contract with the Messageries Maritimes as the French Government imposed with regard to the contract with the London, Chatham, and Dover Company—namely, that the French Company's ships should fly the English flag; that they should be commanded by English officers, and be manned by English crews?

MR. CHANNING said, he wished to ask a question about the inquiries respecting fatal accidents to railway servants. It was well-known that railway men had again and again demanded that they should be treated in the same way as miners, and have men who were acquainted with the daily details of their work to carry out inquiries for them. During the last four years no fewer than 2,000 railway servants had lost their lives in other than train accidents, and in only one or two of these instances had there been any inquiry whatever. He thought it most important that men who were acquainted with the daily work of railway servants should look into such cases and make recommendations which would enable the Board of Trade to deal with the real causes of the fatalities.

Mr. CHAPLIN rose to continue the Debate——

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in his place, and claimed to move, 'That the Question be now put."

THE CHAIRMAN: After the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer a short time ago, I must leave this matter to the judgment of the Committee.

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 221; Noes 116.—(Division List, No. 58.)

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

It being Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House at Nine of the clock.

## EVENING SITTING.

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Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

### SUPPLY.

Resolved, That this House will again resolve itself into a Committee of Supply.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (EXPENSES).

### RESOLUTION.

**MR. J. ROWLANDS** (Finsbury, E.) rose to move the following Resolution:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under 'The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Act, 1875.'"

An hon. MEMBER: Take the Division at once.

***MR. J. ROWLANDS** said, he was afraid he could not fall in with that view of the hon. Member, though he thought there would be very little doubt of the result if the House were to divide now. He did not think any apology was necessary for bringing a question like this before the House at the present time. For a long period of years they had been broadening out their institutions, and the one ideal of most persons had been that this House should be as thoroughly representative of all sections of the community as it was possible by a popular election to make it. They had broadened out the whole question of the franchise; they had gone further, and thought it necessary to re-adjust their electoral areas. But there was one thing they had not done at present, and that was, they had not liberated candidates for Parliamentary honours from the official charges which, in his opinion, should belong to the community in some way or other, and not the individual who sought to do the work of the nation. Those who had read the Resolution would notice that it contained two distinct propositions. The first was—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds."

That in itself was a self-contained proposition, and anyone could support that without supporting the latter part of the Resolution he had placed on the Paper. But before he had done, he thought he should give such evidence in the way of figures as to show it was quite possible not only to support the first part of the Resolution, but also the latter part, and that he should be able to prove that the Returning Officers' charges could be materially reduced. He had put into his Resolution a particular form of words thad had given rise to some amount of discussion. Instead of using the words "the rates or Consolidated Fund," he had purposely put in that these charges "should be defrayed out of public funds." His reason for doing so was that upon this occasion they wanted to get a definite expression of the opinion of the House as to whether the community should bear these expenses or whether they should still remain a charge upon the candidate. There was, undoubtedly, much difference of opinion amongst Members of this House as to whether candidates should be exonerated from these charges, much difference of opinion as to where the charges should be placed, and he proposed to-night to get as strong an expression of opinion as possible from those who believed candidates should be liberated from these expenses. If they went as far as that to-night it would be quite possible, when the practical suggestion was made in the House, either by Amendment to a Bill before the House or by a separate measure, for the House to express an opinion whether the expense should be put on the Consolidated Fund or the rates. That could be done in the form of an Amendment to a Bill or a separate measure, and if the Consolidated Fund were included in the measure the House would have the power of saying in what quarter the charge should be placed. So far as he was concerned to-night, what he desired was that he should have the support of the House in definitely stating—he hoped by no small majority—that the person who was charged by his fellows, whatever his social position might be, to represent them in this House should not have a burden put upon him or his friends in the way of penal charges. The second portion of his Resolution was—

> "That a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under 'The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Act, 1875.'"

When he came to deal with this part of the Resolution he would be able to show that the scale of charges was far too high. Dealing with the first part of the Resolution they would find that for a considerable period of time there was no very definite notion as to what the distinct charges were that could be inflicted upon the candidates, or what was the distinct opinion of the Returning Officer. But after the Ballot Act it was found necessary to move in the direction of fixing these charges, and the task was taken in hand by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury (Sir H. James). While he might have to criticise the Act of 1875 he wished to pay his tribute of praise to the right hon. and learned Gentleman for the good work he then did; and though he differed from the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to the result, he still thought it was a useful work to bring the charges within a definite scope. The principle, even then, of the official expenses being removed from the candidate and placed on the back of the community was advocated in this House, when the right hon. Gentleman—who at that time represented one of the boroughs of London—the late Mr. Fawcett challenged the position he (Mr. Rowlands) was challenging to-night, and on going into Committee on the 6th of April, 1875, moved—

> "That no measure dealing with the expenses of Returning Officers is likely to reduce those expenses which does not interest the constituencies in economy by relieving the candidates of the charge."

That, so far as he could ascertain, was the last definite discussion on this question raised as a distinct issue, and it was very interesting to turn back to the Debate that took place on Mr. Fawcett's Amendment and see the line of argument taken by the opponents of the proposition, and from that they could judge whether during the last 20 years they had made any advance towards the settlement of the proposition contained in his Resolution. He found there was a very wide difference of opinion in the House with regard to the proposition of Mr. Fawcett. One interesting fact was that at that time the support which Mr. Fawcett received did not come entirely from the side of the House on which he sat, but from various portions of the House. But possibly the most interesting kind of argument used against Mr. Fawcett was that used by Mr. Yorke, then Member for Gloucester, who said—

> "He did not attribute much importance to the remarks of the hon. Member for Hackney with reference to the increasing difficulty of obtaining candidates for seats in that House, as there was always a sufficient number hovering about the gates of that paradise who, whenever the opportunity occurred, were ready to go down and pay a handsome sum for the chance of obtaining the privilege."

That was a very fair statement of the plutocrat position, as though the whole thing to be considered was not whether a Representative had the ability to represent his constituents with honour to himself and credit to the constituency, but whether he happily possessed a banking account sufficiently large to allow him to have a little sport when he thought he would like to contest a constituency. He did not think they would hear much of that sort of argument to-night. If they were to have any, he wished to say at once that those of them who supported this Resolution to-night did not specially support it because they thought that perhaps those who were known as working class candidates should be increased in the House. They believed that would be good, but they also admitted there were many men who could do credit to the nation whose means were comparatively limited, who were able to give their time, energy, and intelligence to conducting the work of the nation, but still they ought not to be charged with one halfpenny more than was necessary. He did not know that it was necessary to deal any further with the criticisms of the other side. The then Solicitor General, Sir John Holker, was afraid someone might be inflicted with a share of the charge without having the chance of voting for the identical man he would prefer as his Representative. Until every elector could have a Member for himself they must vote for the one nearest to their own standard. But the real position was put in 1875 by Mr. Fawcett in as strong a light as it was possible for anyone to put it. Mr. Fawcett said—

> "Nothing would be more likely to weaken or destroy the efficiency of Representative Institutions in this country than if an impression were to gain currency that the House maintained laws which placed obstacles in the way of poor men obtaining a seat in Parliament."

And Mr. Fawcett used those words in their very widest sense. The result of that Motion was that it was defeated by a majority of 104—ayes 150, noes 46. He did not think they would meet with that result to-night. He thought they should pay a tribute of praise to Mr. Fawcett as one of the pioneers who raised this question 20 years ago in this House. It was not generally known, excepting by those who had taken the trouble to look up the records on this question, that the House had given its consent to the principle contained in his Resolution. In 1886 a Bill was brought into this House, he believed by the hon. Member for Westmeath as representing his Party, and it had, peculiarly enough, the object of breaking down the official expenses, which looked in the direction of the second part of his proposition. Before that Bill was passed it was amended, and it was so amended that the candidates were relieved of their official expenses so far as Ireland was concerned. That Bill went to another place, and like many other Bills that had left this House and gone to another place, it was not in its entirety—in regard to those provisions—upon the Statute Book of the country at the present time. Another feature of this Bill was one he supposed he was expected to make some remarks upon to-night. The Bill dealt with what were known as bogus candidates; that was, gentlemen who were supposed to put up for constituencies, not with the object of being returned, but for the purpose of annoying those who were undoubtedly the representatives of the feeling of the constituency. It might be said, "Supposing this Motion is carried this evening, what do you propose with regard to bogus candidates? Are you going to allow that state of things to exist under the new conditions, that any person can go just for amusement, or advertisement or otherwise, and put himself up for a Party candidate without expense, and get that cheap notoriety they desire?" He admitted that was a question that ought to be very frankly met, and he was prepared to meet it very frankly indeed. Personally, it did not exhibit any difficulties to himself because he was a believer in second ballots, and with a second ballot he thought the atmosphere would be very much cleared. There might, if necessary, be this further provision: that no person should be accepted as an official candidate unless requisitioned by a certain percentage of the electors, or they might introduce the drastic proposal of the Nationalist Member who brought in the Bill of 1886—namely, that if a candidate did not poll a certain percentage of the electorate he should be mulcted in the expenses that were caused thereby. Personally, he preferred the second ballot to any other method, and he thought that would meet the difficulty. The real position with regard to Parliamentary candidates came to this, and he threw the onus of proof on anyone who might oppose his Resolution. Why should any candidate for Parliamentary honours be placed in an exceptional condition to the candidates for all municipal or local honours? At the present time the candidates for the County Council, the Municipal Council, the School Board, or any other of the local offices, were not asked to defray the official expenses in connection with the election; and in 1888, when they were passing the Local Government measure for England and Wales, no one thought of raising the question as to whether or not the candidates under this new system of government should pay the official expenses. It was at once assumed as a matter of course that these expenses would be defrayed by the community. The same thing applied to the measure at the end of last year and the beginning of this, which extended this local life to rural England. No one then thought of raising the point that the candidate should be mulcted in the expenses, and he therefore said that any person who opposed this Motion should give definite and distinct reasons for so doing. A person who was elected to Parliament was elected not simply to satisfy his own vanity or his own ambition, but to do something for the benefit of his fellows. He hoped and believed a person was elected for the good of the common weal, and for taking that position he ought to be exonerated from these charges. Let them consider the position of affairs. He happened to sit for the division of East Finsbury, and he had to pay his own official expenses. For the County Council he had as a colleague the Prime Minister of the country, who sat for East Finsbury. He (Mr. Rowlands) was elected as a Member of Parliament in July, the Prime Minister was elected in March, and he paid his own official expenses, whilst the Prime Minister did not have to pay his. As a London County Councillor they had the Duke of Norfolk, whose official expenses were paid. Then, on the London County Council they had as a Member the right hon. Gentleman who sat for the London University (Sir J. Lubbock), and he (Mr. Rowlands) would like to know if anyone could demonstrate what was the difference in the right hon. Gentleman's position when he sat in this House and when he sat in Spring Gardens? For his seat in Parliament the right hon. Gentleman had to pay his official expenses, but as a London County Councillor he did not have to pay them; and he should like to know if some psychological change took place, so that the right hon. Gentleman was not as good a man at Spring Gardens as he was in this House? Many other hon. Members had dual positions in London, and he did not know that they were worse at Spring Gardens than they were in this House, because in the one case they had paid their official expenses, and in the other case they had not. In London he thought they illustrated the utter absurdity of the present position of things. Before passing from this phase of the question it would not be right to ignore the remarks of the Prime Minister at Birmingham two days ago, and he was pleased to quote them. On that occasion his Lordship informed his audience—

> "I may say, on behalf of the Government, that we will welcome any opportunity of giving effect to that provision, whenever and by whomsoever it may be proposed, with all its necessary consequences."

He was pleased that the noble Lord anticipated his Motion in the way he did. He wished only to detain the House for a short time on the second portion of the Resolution, and he thought he should be able to demonstrate that here it was possible to reduce these expenses very materially. Let him draw attention to the gross cost of the official expenses of the Returning Officers in the United Kingdom respectively in the years 1885, 1886, and 1892. He merely wished to trouble the House with these figures, because a very important lesson might be drawn from them. The total charges for England and Wales in 1885 were £175,014; in 1886 they were £109,052; and in 1892 they were £154,165. In Scotland, during the same periods, they were respectively £30,160, £16,896, and £17,855. In Ireland in the same years they were £30,731, £12,988, and £25,520. He proposed to leave 1886 out of the comparison, because then the election was fought under exceptional circumstances, and there were a large number of non-contested seats. Taking the years 1885 and 1892, they found that the expenses which, in England and Wales in 1885 were £175,000, swung back to £154,000 in 1892. In Scotland the expenses, which were £30,000 in 1885, went down to £16,000 in 1886, and went back to over £17,000 in 1892. The moral of that was, so far as he could ascertain, that the Scotch people availed themselves of the advantages they had of taxing the Returning Officers' expenses. They did it so effectually that the result was that in 1892 it was possible to fight a General Election in Scotland upon almost half the cost of the fight that took place in 1885, whereas in England and Wales they got almost back to the old figures of 1885. And in Ireland they got back to £25,000 in 1892. He had taken the trouble to go still further with regard to these figures, and had taken out some of the divisions of Scotland. He would not trouble the House with the list he had prepared; but after going carefully through them he found that in Scotland, if they went through the detailed expenses allowed, they showed in the constituencies in Scotland the charge under each particular head was vastly different in 1892 to what it was in 1885. He would take one or two cases at random, for the same thing went through them all. In East Aberdeen the cost in 1885 was £700, in 1892 it was £556. In West Aberdeen there was a still greater discrepancy, for in 1885 the cost was £697, whilst in 1892 it was £393. So he could go on through the whole list, which was taken at random from the Parliamentary Return. It might be said possibly there were more uncontested elections in Scotland in 1892 than there were in 1885. Peculiarly enough it was just the reverse, because while there were five uncontested seats in Scotland in 1885 the two Universities were the only constituencies that were uncontested in 1892. That was a practical illustration of what could be done in regard to the reduction of official expenses, and without interfering with the proper conduct of the election. Turning to the two elections in the Metropolis in 1892—in March that for the County Council and in July the Parliamentary—and comparing the cost, he found it was as follows: In 1892 there were in the Metropolis County Council and Parliamentary elections. The County Council elections cost in official expenses £8,940 and the Parliamentary elections £14,055, a difference of £5,115 for identically the same work. The polling stations, the Presiding Officers, and the polling clerks were the same in both; and the Registers were practically the same, the lodgers in one counterbalancing the women voters in the other. There were five County Council elections uncontested and four Parliamentary elections, the same Returning Officer being employed with regard to each set of circumstances. In the City the items were—County Council election, £364; Parliamentary, £732; difference £368, or, roughly, double in the one case what it was in the other. In Dulwich, County Council, £215; Parliamentary, £331; difference £116; in Poplar County Council election, £160; Parliamentary, £265; difference £105. Here they had no mere theoretical statement that it was possible to reduce materially the Returning Officers' expenses, but they had the actual evidence that it was done in the same year in London, with the same Returning Officers and upon the same Register. In face of such circumstances how could the existing Schedule be justified? In the Schedule of 1875 the first item was, "Preparing and publishing notice of election (county and boroughs), £2 2s." He was informed that Judge Collier, of the Liverpool County Court in 1885, on the taxation of costs of several divisions, allowed 2s. 6d., and stated that that was good payment for filling such a form, and he was at first only inclined to allow 1s. And yet there was a maximum for doing this work of two guineas. The word "maximum" was a blessed word in the ears of the Returning Officers. When they had fixed a maximum the mercury soon began to rise until it got very near it. Again, turning to the Schedule, there was a notice of election for which one guinea was allowed. He held in his hand a printed list of all the documents supplied by Knight & Co., and he found they could buy these very notices at the rate of 6s. per 100! Nomination papers they could buy at the rate of 3s. per quire, and so on with item after item. With reference to ballot boxes, he would mention that in 1885, when the Parliamentary elections came on, they had in his division just had the School Board elections, and he went to see if they could not get hold of the same ballot boxes as had been used for the latter elections and hire them for the Parliamentary elections at a maximum charge of 5s. each. The Returning Officer, however, said they had disappeared and could not be found, so that they had to buy new ballot boxes, and every candidate knew he had a right to take them home with him if he liked. Then, again, they had to pay for "stations," and hon. Members knew at what a trifling cost stations were made in some parts of the country. Besides the price list he had got from Messrs. Knight, he had also taken the trouble to obtain an estimate from a leading firm of printers of what they would print ballot papers for. In the Schedule the Returning Officer was allowed 30s. per 1,000, but this leading firm of printers—a "Society" house—estimated to supply them at the rate of 10,000 for £3 5s. That was, by illustration, the whole position with regard to the charges in the Schedule. He did not criticise that Schedule except in so far as he thought the charges could be reduced in the direction he had indicated. He thought the time had come when they should have a practical system of conducting elections. They had increased the number of elections throughout the country by their Parliamentary action within the last few months, and why should they not now deal with this question in a rational manner? Let there be some central authority—say the rate collecting authority—which should supply itself with a proper set of machinery for conducting elections, keep this machinery in repair, and hold it until it was required for the purpose of some election, when a moderate sum could be paid for the user of such machinery. He thought he had proved that there was ground for a material alteration and reduction in the present scale of expenses. These charges, he contended, ought to be placed on the public and not on the candidates. He felt very strongly that in broadening their Representative Institutions they ought to continue their work until they had made it perfect. They ought to have the doors of this House open to any man who won the confidence of his fellows; the only credential he ought to have for entering that House was that he had won the suffrage of those who believed he had come there to do their work according to his conscience and to devote his time and energy to their good and well-being. He begged to move his Resolution.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) seconded the Motion. It was, he said, by no means a Party Motion. It was a Motion in which men holding very different political views might join if they thought it right that the State of the country should pay the expenses of these elections. The condition of things in this House had very much changed within the last few years. Hon. Members had to be in much closer attendance in Committees and in other ways than in former times, and therefore it became more or less a tax upon every Member in this House which was not so much felt some years ago. This very condition of things rendered it necessary to be in constant attendance daily, and consequently the poorer a man might be the less would he be able to bear the strain that was thus thrust upon him. He echoed the words of his hon. Friend, that they were not there for private ends. They were there to do the work of the public, and it did seem a strange thing they should be taxed from beginning to end in order to be permitted to do it. Of course, it was all very well for a certain type of politician, with which they were tolerably familiar—those who were aspirants for place and office—needy lawyers seeking work and emoluments, and that other class whose political services were rendered to Party with the off chance of a baronetcy or peerage. But the majority of Members of this House could not rightfully aspire to either of these positions, but must be the working bees. Recently there had been expressed a sentiment all over the country and also in this House that there should be more working men in Parliament, and in order that there should be a larger number of working men in Parliament, the majority outside seemed to him to advocate the payment of Members, and many in this House seemed to hold the same opinion. But payment of Members was a very small thing compared with the tax by the election expenses on every candidate who aspired to enter this House. He had heard some hon. Members say that, even supposing there were payment of Members, it would only enable them to spend a little more in the constituency, and under such circumstances the poor man would be at a greater disadvantage still. But, without going into the matter, there was the fact that they were met with the initial difficulty that, before a man could come into the House of Commons, he must pay the election expenses when he had been selected as candidate by a constituency. It had been his fortune, good or bad, to fight many elections. He began his in 1868, when he had to fight two of the wealthiest men in England, and even with all their wealth he came very near to being second on the poll, being kept out only by the Tories and Liberals coalescing and dividing the votes. That was obviated now, but from that day to this there had always been before one's eyes the difficulty for a poor man of finding the necessary expenses for an election. They were still further handicapped not only by the election expenses, but by having to keep up the Register from year to year. How hon. Members could oppose this Motion and yet say they were in favour of labour representation he could not conceive. Although the property qualification for Members of Parliament, in the old sense, had been abolished, the election expenses constituted a property qualification just as much as the old property qualification by law. He thought the time had come when the majority of the nation had got rid of the notion that mere money—mere wealth—should be a qualification for a seat in the House. But although in sentiment they believed that money ought not to prevail over every other qualification, nevertheless they went on in the same old way, welcoming the "money-bag," however made, whether by Company promoting or Company rigging, or anything of that sort. Never mind how it was made; so long as a man had money it was "Open, Sesame!" to him in many of their constituencies, and so into this House. If they were honest in their belief that there should be room for more working men, let them at once remove the difficulty in their path, in order that merit, capacity, ability for work and industry should find its proper place in this House. The Resolution expressed no opinion as to whether the payment for the election expenses should come out of the local rates or out of the Consolidated Fund, and he, for his part, was quite willing to leave it to the Government to take the best course they could in framing a measure for the purpose. He agreed with his hon. Friend, that the necessary machinery for these various elections should be obtained and handed over to some Central Authority, and once purchased there would be very little expense in keeping it up, the only cost that would have to be borne being the necessary printing, which would be very trifling indeed. He hoped hon. Members would unite in urging the Government to accept the Motion, and that at an early day they might find election expenses put upon the proper shoulders and the candidates relieved as they ought to be.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

> "In the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under 'The Parliamentary Election (Returning Officers') Expenses Act, 1875.' "—(*Mr. J. Rowlands.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

**Mr. CAINE** (Bradford, E.) said that, as far as he was personally concerned, the question was whether at the next Election he should have to pay £150 to a Returning Officer or whether each elector of East Bradford should pay 1½d. On the whole, he preferred that each elector should pay 1½d. He was certain that if there were a ballot taken in a full House upon the question there would not be a single "No" against it. During a pretty well-assorted experience of electioneering he had had to pay about £2,500 to different Returning Officers in the nine contested elections he had gone through. His experience of boroughs was very much better than that of counties, for he had little hesitation in saying that the average Returning Officer or Under Sheriff in a county constituency was little better than a harpy. In 1885 he contested the Tottenham Division of Middlesex—one of the largest divisions in the United Kingdom. He did not know who the Sheriff was, but he had a lively recollection of the Under Sheriff—Mr. Wynne E. Baxter—who had charge of the three divisions of Tottenham, Enfield, and Hornsey. According to law this gentleman was bound to do the very best he could for the candidates to whom he was responsible; to expend the smallest amount of money practicable in providing what was necessary for the machinery of the election. The Act, unfortunately, laid down a maximum, and this gentleman ingeniously charged each division the full maximum allowed by law, using the same machinery in each case, with, of course, the exception of printing. He charged him (Mr. Caine) and his opponent a good round sum for ballot boxes; then he sold the same boxes to Hornsey, and afterwards resold them again to Enfield, making a handsome profit in each instance. In one case he hired from the Guildhall a set of fittings kept in stock for all kinds of elections. He paid one guinea for the use of those fittings and charged him, as Liberal candidate, £52 10s. But this gentleman was not content with that, for, having made all these various charges, he took care to send in his account just the day before that on which the account of the election expenses had to be returned. The consequence was, that only three courses were open—to pay and say nothing, to return the account as disputed, or else to have it taxed. Having, after some difficulty, persuaded his opponent to take the matter into the County Court in order to have the account taxed, they asked for vouchers, and the only voucher Mr. Baxter produced was a voucher signed for the full amount by a firm called Baxter & Co., advertising agents. Investigation showed that Baxter & Co. was nothing but Mr. Wynne E. Baxter, who had created himself into a firm for the purpose of supplying the Sheriff with the necessary machinery of the elections. He produced a receipt for the full amount "as agreed," giving no details whatever, and this he had the impudence to tender in Court as a complete voucher for the enormous amount of money which he had overcharged the candidates. On being pressed he was compelled to admit that "Baxter & Co." was no other than himself. The fact was brought out that Mr. Baxter, as Under Sheriff and solicitor, must have advised the Sheriff to make an agreement to pay Baxter, as advertising agent, double the legal maximum. There was a charge of £48 for professional services. On inquiry it was brought out that these professional services were for "advising the Sheriff in the conduct of the election." So that the House would see that he as candidate was called upon to pay his share of the £48 to this person for advising the Sheriff to enter into a contract with Baxter himself, on the pretext of his being an advertising agent. The Registrar of the County Court before whom the matter came characterised the document as a bogus voucher, and the result was that the Returning Officer's charges were cut down by some £670, and he was made to pay the costs besides. He could assure the House that the cheque he received in respect of the over-payments he had been compelled to make to the Returning Officer was the sweetest bit of money he had ever put into his pocket. All that he could say was that he now regretted that when he was asked to pay such outrageous charges he had not proceeded against the Under Sheriff and sued him for the penalty of £500 for extortion. In his opinion, it was quite time that the House should decide that it was the duty of the constituencies to find the money for the necessary expenses for sending their Representatives to the House, as well as they had to defray the expenses of returning Members of County Councils, School Boards, and other Representative Bodies. With regard to the charge that would be thrown upon the country if this proposal were carried into effect, it would not amount to more than five-eighths of a penny per elector per annum. He hoped that the House would carry the proposal by an overwhelming majority, or even without a Division, and he was satisfied that if that were the case the Government would be heartily supported by all sections of the House if they brought in a measure dealing with the subject during the present Session.

*SIR H. JAMES (Bury, Lancashire) said, he thought that the House would not deem it unnatural for him to take some interest in the question raised by the Amendment. The hon. Member for East Finsbury had said that, speaking generally, the efforts made in 1875 to mitigate an existing grievance had not proceeded far enough. If his hon. Friend was aware of the feelings and prejudices that had to be combated in 1875 he would not disparage the efforts made on that occasion. In those old days very heavy charges were made against a candidate, as the right of the Returning Officer to make such charges was almost unlimited. No matter how preposterous the charges might be, the candidate was always advised to pay them, as otherwise he would make himself extremely unpopular in the constituency. He recollected well that in 1875 there was a strong feeling in the House in favour of those over charges. Members who supported the Bill were subjected even to personal abuse, and it was charged against them that they were men of narrow spirit, who were trying to deprive the Returning Officers of their vested interests in elections. But time had progressed since then in many ways, and they had learned a great deal. He was not about to oppose the proposal that had been made for revision of the Act of 1875; on the contrary, he welcomed and supported it. He would remind the House that the Motion involved two questions. The first, and far the more important one, was on whom in the future would the charges of the Returning Officers fall? When the subject of the payment of election expenses out of the rates was brought forward in 1872 he, with his right hon. Friend the present Chancellor of the Exchequer—they were young politicians then—opposed that proposal, and told in the Division which resulted in its defeat. But times had changed, and he had altered his opinion. He did not say he was wrong in 1875, but he thought he was right now in thinking that the Returning Officer's expenses should be paid by some Public Body instead of by the individual candidate. It was objected in 1872 that if this were done a great number of bogus candidates would come forward; but, in his opinion, the enlightened public feeling of the present day would easily put down bogus candidatures. The question, however, was upon whom the burden paying these expenses was to fall. His hon. Friend spoke of putting the burden upon the Consolidated Fund, but he protested against that. If the burden were to be removed it ought to be cast upon the locality, and not upon the Consolidated Fund. Where were they to find the public opinion that would be a check against bogus candidates and excessive expenditure if they once threw the burden upon the Consolidated Fund? If the expenses came out of the Consolidated Fund, a great many people would welcome a contested election. There would be a large number of people always willing that the expenditure should be incurred if they could throw the burden upon the general taxpayers, who would know nothing and care nothing about it. Such people would say—"We will get the benefit of the expenditure in the constituency of money which will be provided by general taxpayers." If, however, Parliament were to say to the locality, "You will have to pay the expenses of a contested election," then the ratepayers, while not objecting to a fair, healthy contest, would not tolerate a sham election. If they removed the burden from candidates, they would be, to a certain extent, opening the ports into which any candidates could enter. But, if they made the constituencies responsible for the costs, the constituents would themselves look after those who sought to enter by the ports, and an impostor would have no chance of success if he became a candidate in a constituency. In making the constituencies bear the cost of their elections would lie the real check against false candidates. He thought he was right in saying that both the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian and the late Mr. Fawcett had expressed the opinion that if a change were made—and they thought it ought to be made—the burden of election expenses should be cast upon the local and not upon Imperial taxation. If the Consolidated Fund were made to bear the burden, there would be no one to care about economy. If, on the other hand, each locality were made to pay its own election expenses, everybody in the locality would take an interest in the expenditure and would protest against any excess, and would demand that the election expenses be kept within narrow limits. His hon. Friend the Member for Bradford had referred to charges for professional advice. He would point out that if the cost of the election expenses were thrown upon the local rates, the locality would prevent any undue sum being paid to any legal adviser. The ratepayers would say to the Town Clerk—"You must advise the Mayor as the Returning Officer at elections just as you advise him at other times." But they would not say that if the burden were thrown on the Consolidated Fund. Therefore, while he hoped the Resolution would be carried, the arrangement should be to throw the burden upon the localities themselves. The matter was governed by the common-sense view that those who were in a position to check and were interested in checking the expenditure should bear the burden. If this were done, he did not think they need much mind what charges were set out in the Schedule. If the locality had to pay, the people of the locality would take care that they did not pay too much; and the Returning Officer would not dare to go to the ratepayers and charge them more than he ought to charge them. The Member for Bradford had given the House his reminiscences of a Returning Officer, and he was bound to say that he thought the hon. Member had carried Parliamentary criticism to its utmost limits in the charges which he brought again the Returning Officer in question. If those charges were accurately stated, they did not fairly represent the general state of affairs throughout the country. Still, however, he was of opinion that heavy burdens were cast upon candidates, and that those burdens ought to be and could be lessened. Twenty years ago it was necessary to go by steps and to make concessions in order to carry any Bill at all; but he was satisfied that the maximum charges allowed gave a substantial profit on the expenditure to the Returning Officers. This was a state of things that ought not be allowed to exist. If the House took the course of throwing the expenses on the localities it need not care about the items; but so long as they were to be paid by candidates the items were of importance. If the present arrangement was to be continued, a Bill ought to be introduced and referred to a Select Committee to settle what would be deemed fair charges with our present knowledge and experience; and it was probable that 30 per cent. could safely be taken off the present maximum charge. He thanked the hon. Member behind him for having introduced the matter to the House.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Perhaps it would be as well if at this comparatively early stage of the Debate I state the views of Her Majesty's Government. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bury has perhaps a greater right than any other Member to speak upon the subject, because he has by persistent action from 1875 onwards identified himself in a peculiar way with the purification of the various methods by which seats are obtained in this House; and I rejoice that my right hon. Friend has taken the view he has just expressed. The Mover of the Amendment stated his case with great moderation, temperance, and force, though one would wish that he had dealt more with the main objection to throwing the expenses on the public funds—namely, that it would multiply candidates, as to which I will say a few words before I sit down. The important part of the Amendment is the proposal that the official expenses of Parliamentary elections should be cast, as are the expenses of municipal and School Board elections, upon public funds. The question is upon what public funds the charges should be cast; and the view of the Government is that they should be cast upon the locality. Of course, if one thought merely of a popular cry, there is a great deal to be said for casting them upon the Consolidated Fund, because I am afraid that the popular idea of the Consolidated Fund is that it is fed Heaven only knows how, and it is not recognised that it is fed by taxpayers. The extravagance that would result from throwing these charges upon an Imperial fund has been well described by my right hon. Friend, and that is the view of the difficulty taken by Her Majesty's Government. We think it might be no improvement, but possibly a move in the wrong direction, to cast these charges upon that abstraction, the Consolidated Fund. The arguments against that cause are surely conclusive. It is not probable that expenses would be reduced unless the locality is interested in economy; and what those expenses mean has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Bradford in his vigorous and spirited speech, with its illustrations, privileged and otherwise. Then the argument that the payment of the expenses out of a public fund would lead to a multiplication of candidates is more effectually answered if it is the locality itself that has to bear the burden. In the opinion of the Government, the Resolution does not say any more than the truth when it asks the House to affirm that a material reduction of the charges is possible; but in our view that reduction is only possible upon the condition that the localities are interested by having to bear the burden of their own extravagance, and by having the supervision of the whole expenditure. The apprehended evil of a possible multiplication of candidates is no doubt a possible evil. If no expenses are thrown upon candidates it may be that bogus candidates will spring up. The Mover of the Amendment seemed to be in favour of checking that danger by not exempting a candidate from a share of the expenses unless he stood upon a requisition signed by a certain number or proportion of electors.

*MR. J. ROWLANDS: I only put that forward as one of the suggested means; but I did not particularly endorse it.

MR. J. MORLEY: I know. The second ballot has also been mentioned. There is something to be said for requiring a requisition with a certain number of names upon it, but there is much more to be said against it. What does this requisition mean? It means that the voters must place their names on the paper, so that the secrecy of the Ballot would be violated, and the independence of the voters at an end. I think that the preparation of these requisitions will be by no means an inexpensive process, and that there are other objections which do not render this plan a very effective one in order to gain the end sought. A much preferable plan would be that every candidate who did not poll a certain proportion of votes at the election should not be exempt from some portion of the charges. The question of a second ballot is one that assumes more and more importance every day. I must remind the House that in 1882 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean brought in and carried a Bill to amend the law relating to Parliamentary elections by providing for a second election in certain cases.

LORD R. CHURCHILL: In what year was that?

Mr. J. MORLEY: That was in 1882. That Bill was carried, I find, by a majority of two—there being 87 votes against 85—with the assent of the Government of the day. The House assented by a small majority to the proposal to throw the expenses on the rates, but I must admit that there was some difference of opinion as to whether a second election was or was not necessary. The noble Lord voted against the Bill. But the question of the second ballot is, as I have said, one of growing importance. I used, for my own part, to believe that there was a formidable danger that under the operation of a second ballot this House would be split up into groups and sections instead of retaining the two or three broad lines which distinguish the Parties of which it is composed, and I must admit that it is in the case of foreign Parliaments where the second ballot obtains that this system of groups and sections has arisen; but in spite of what happens under foreign constitutional systems, the introduction of the second ballot would not, I think, produce the same results here under our different conditions. I would like to point out what the amount of the charge is which would fall upon the rates if the system were adopted. I know that some hon. Members are alarmed at the idea that there should be any material addition to the rates. No doubt much of the old aversion to and alarm at increased Imperial taxation has been transferred to local rates. My answer to that is that you should look at the maximum of the rate. That sum has been stated earlier in the Debate to be likely to amount to one-eighth of a farthing in the £1 of rateable value in each year. Some hon. Gentleman who has spoken to-night has said that we have an election upon an average once in four years. Since 1885 that average has been reduced, but, taking the average annual rate at one-eighth of a farthing in the £1, if an election occurred once in four years this would mean a charge of half a farthing for the year of the election. The hon. Member for Bradford said that in his case the amount would be five-eighths of a penny. I believe that would be correct, but I would adhere to the statement that generally it would not exceed half a farthing in the £1 on the rates.

Mr. CAINE: I meant per head, not in the £1.

Mr. J. MORLEY: My figure, which I believe to be a sound one, is half a farthing in the £1 of rateable value. It would be absurd surely for hon. Members to entertain any fears as to what would be the views of constituents on a matter sound in principle at a cost to them of half a farthing in the £1 on the year of election. We all want to see that Chamber as widely representative as possible of all classes and interests. We all believe that it is in the highest degree desirable that there should be a large infusion of direct labour representation in that House. The proposal before us will not only open the doors of the House to workmen, but will facilitate the entrance of men of moderate means of all classes. The easier it becomes for Members to enter this House on their merits, and on the strength of the principles which they profess, the more lofty will become the authority of Parliament and the greater the chance of its counsels being prudent and wise. The feeling of the House is, in my opinion, pretty evident, and I do not believe that there is any material difference of opinion among us. For my part, I shall cheerfully support the proposal.

Lord R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, if ever there was a charge for which, in his opinion, there was much to be said, it was in connection with the expenses of returning Members at General Elections to the Imperial Parliament. It was the greatest object the State could achieve to get a complete representation of all classes in Parliament, whether they were Labour Representatives, Representatives of the middle classes, Representatives of literature, or science, or art, or law, or even of the landed interest; and therefore it was right that to achieve that end there should be a contribution from the Consolidated Fund. The contribution need not amount to a very large sum. With the proposal that the money should come from the rates he could not agree. The rates were already enormous. Were the Party opposite prepared to throw upon the rates of London, in addition to the expenses of a double registration, the expenses of Returning Officers and other officials? What would those electors of Bury say if the right hon. and learned Gentleman who represented them were to obtain payment of his Returning Officer's expenses out of the rates? Did his right hon. and learned Friend think that in those circumstances he would have the large and overwhelming support which he had enjoyed up to this date? If there was one thing that touched a constituency more than another it was putting charges upon the rates. There was not a Member on his side of the House, he thought, who would not contemplate with a certain friendliness the idea of an Imperial contribution, but he doubted whether any Member on the same side would agree with the plan advocated by the right hon. and learned Member. Coming to the question of the amount of the rate, they found that the Chief Secretary for Ireland placed it at the fourth of a farthing in the £1.

MR. J. MORLEY: I said half a farthing in the £1 would cover it.

LORD R. CHURCHILL said, the calculation of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was based on the gratuitous assumption that there was an election only once in four years. There were elections that came like thieves in the night—for example, the elections of 1874 and 1886—and no doubt in the future they would be more and more likely to come when least expected. How could a constituency be prepared to pay out of the rates a very considerable sum for which no provision had been made in their annual Estimate? He wondered whether the Secretary of State for India would be prepared to throw upon the local rates this extra expense. He protested as strongly as he could against the proposal to burden the rates with electoral charges. Let the candidate bear his fair burdens. Labour candidates, he hoped, were materially assisted by their friends in bearing the registration charges. It had been said that if this proposal were agreed to there would be bogus candidates, but that was the regular bogey that was always invoked when this subject was brought forward. In his opinion, there would not be bogus candidatures. If the proposal were carried out desirable candidates would come forward, and that House would be far more representative than it was at the present time. The expenses of the Returning Officer, however, ought to be borne by the State and not thrown upon the rates. One mischievous proposal of which they had heard was that of proportional representation. He affirmed that the proposal for a second ballot was a far more mischievous one. He asked the House whether they were going to take their Constitution from France, or from Belgium, or from Hungary? His own answer was, no; never. But that was not a sufficient argument. He did not think that the House of Commons would adopt this plan, which was a foreign importation, to which he objected, and which would be entirely unworkable if the proposal were adopted for holding all elections on one day. He protested alike against second ballots, payment of Members, and proportional representation; but he gave his support to the suggestion that there should be a contribution out of Imperial funds towards the expenses of Returning Officers.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he was rather unwilling to intrude himself into the Debate, but, at the same time, he thought that the arguments of those who were opposed to this proposal ought to be laid before the House. Both the right hon. and learned Member for Bury and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary were of opinion that the expenses of the Returning Officer ought not to be thrown upon the Consolidated Fund, while the noble Lord who had last spoken was of opinion that they ought not to be thrown upon the rates. In these circumstances, the matter ought to rest where it was. He admitted that, inasmuch as the election expenses of members of the County Council, of the Parish Council, of the Guardians, and of other Local Bodies were paid out of the rates, it was impossible logically to oppose this proposal. At the same time, he was in that House for the purpose of protecting the interests of his constituents, and if he voted for this proposal he should be voting in his own interests. What did Lord Derby say? That when a man entered the field of politics and sought a seat in this House, the first object he should aim at was self-sacrifice for the common good. He subscribed to that sentiment, and, acting in the spirit of it, his duty was to vote against the Motion, and to pay out of his own pocket what he was called upon to pay for Returning Officers' charges rather than that they should be placed upon the rates. If he studied himself alone, he should vote for the Motion; but, as it was his duty to study his constituents, he should vote against it. The Chief Secretary said that the reduction of expenses was only possible if the locality was called upon to bear the expense. He did not see the logic of that. The right hon. Gentleman was supposed to be master of all the logical sophistries which politicians could bring to bear in support of their views, but he did not see how his statement could be justified when they came to analyse it. If they said reduction was only possible if the locality was called upon to bear the cost, how was it they had had no reform of these charges at the instance of the right hon. Member for Bury? The Chief Secretary said there should be an open door to men of all classes and moderate means to enter that House. They were all agreed as to that. They ought certainly to remove all obstacles to the entry of all classes of men of moderate means. The Member for Bury made an admirable speech, which pleased him very much. The right hon. Gentleman spoke against certain charges they had all had to smart under for professional advice, but he did not tell them the reasons for putting on the particular charge for mileage under which many Members had smarted. In his Schedule the right hon. Gentleman charged 1s. per mile for travelling in county elections, the object being to pay the cost of mileage where persons had to hire horses to carry ballot boxes. He was quite certain that the right hon. Gentleman meant that where a railway admirably served the situation first-class railway fare would have been adequate, but Returning Officers charged 1s. a mile by railway although the distance was much longer by rail than by road. He knew cases where mileage had been charged to the extent of 24 miles by rail when the distance by road was only nine miles. Not only was this the case, but they had had instances of 1s. per mile being charged for the ballot box, as if it could walk, as well as 1s. to the man who carried it. Whilst he was utterly opposed to these election charges being placed on the public funds, he was in favour of the last part of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Finsbury, which stated that a material reduction was possible in the present scale of charges allowed under the Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) Expenses Act, 1875. Why did not the hon. Member and his friends try to get the Government to support a Bill to reform the charges under this Schedule? He objected altogether to any further charge at present being thrown upon the rates. The House, he contended, had no moral right to put a new charge on the rates until the taxpayers had been consulted upon this question, and as the question had never yet been before the constituencies it was their duty to oppose it until the electorate had had an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. Whatever the future might have in store for them public opinion at present was not ripe for the change; therefore, they as practical and sensible politicians were in duty bound to vote against the proposal. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green spoke of needy lawyers and others ambitious of office, but it never seemed to occur to the hon. Member that some people entered this House without ambition at all, except to spend their lives in performing useful work. He should be the last in the world to suggest that the hon. Member himself and his friends entered this House with ulterior aims, and they, on their part, should give the same credit to others. He (Admiral Field) had no ambitious aim. Oh, dear, no! his ambition had been killed long ago, thanks to the legislation of past Radical Governments. Had it not been for that legislation he should not have been there, but on salt water, performing a duty he valued much higher than this. If they passed this Motion they were practically opening the way to the payment of Members. He knew it was said that some of the Colonies had gone in for relieving candidates from all expenses and had substituted payment of Members. But he had it on good authority that the Prime Minister of New South Wales saw the error of his ways and proposed to bring in a Bill to abolish the system of payment of Members, and with the abolition of the payment of Members would go the abolition of the payment of Returning Officers' expenses. If this Motion was passed the charge must fall on the rates, and it was their duty, as moral and not immoral politicians, to vote against what would no doubt be for their own interests, but which would be detrimental to the interests of the taxpayers. He denied that wealth was considered a qualification for Members. The hon. Member for Bethnal Green had said that labour representation ought to have a larger share in that House, and he, therefore, claimed the vote of the hon. Member against the Registration Bill of the present Government, as containing proposals which would greatly increase the expenses candidates would have to pay when they stood for elections, and so bar the way to working men.

*MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) said, that the elections for Municipalities were for the local purposes of the Municipalities, and the election of Members to this House was for national purposes. Everyone in that House was a national servant in that respect; he worked for the nation, and the nation ought to pay. He supposed that the payment of these election expenses must be made from the rates or public funds, but he understood from the Mover that his Resolution did not involve a decision on that point at all, but simply put it on the public funds, and what public funds they should be must be determined hereafter. If that was understood he was entirely in favour of the Amendment, but if it was understood that the charge was to be on the local rates he should vote against it.

*MR. NEWDIGATE (Warwickshire, Nuneaton) would not have ventured to speak in this Debate but for the statement that had been made that there was practically no opposition to the Resolution. He ventured to think that among the Conservative Members there was a very strong opposition to it. He thought that if the expenses of Returning Officers were to be paid by the nation many bogus candidates would spring up, and as a county Member he protested most strongly against the suggestion of the right hon. Member for Bury and of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, that the expenses should fall upon the local rates. Hon. Members on the other side seemed to forget the enormous number of rates which land had to bear at the present time—such as the poor, highway, School Board, sanitary and police rates, Income Tax, Land Tax, tithes, and Inhabited House Duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to impose fresh burdens upon land, and he (Mr. Newdigate) must protest strongly against the action of those Members of the House of Commons who would support a Resolution to make the expenses of Returning Officers in connection with Parliamentary elections fall upon the local rates.

*MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said, that notwithstanding the remarks that had been made from the other side of the House, there had been a consensus of opinion in favour of these charges being paid by the rates, for the simple reason that if the Local Authorities had to pay them they would look closely after them, while, on the other hand, if they fell on the Imperial funds there would be no adequate supervision of the expenses. At the last General Election the cost of Returning Officers' expenses in England and Wales was £154,000, in Ireland £25,000, and in Scotland £17,000, or a total outlay for the United Kingdom of £196,000. There had been four General Elections during the last 14 years, equal to one every three and a-half years, making the average expenses on this head £56,000 per annum. If the Local Authorities had to meet these charges, he was not overstating the case when he said that the £56,000 would be very probably reduced to £25,000 or £30,000, say to little more than one-half that was now paid by the candidates. If it came down to the amount he indicated that would mean an annual average of £45 per constituency, and he was sure that if the whole people could be polled on the question not one in 50 would object to meet that outlay. The hon. Member alluded to the case of Scotland, and as a few facts were worth a great deal of theory, he might mention the result of the last local and Parliamentary elections which took place in Glasgow, the two comparing exactly. For the Glasgow municipal election there were seven contested seats, and there were seven Members of Parliament for Glasgow, therefore the same number contested each election. The whole cost of the official expenses in the case of the seven Members of the Municipal Council was £893, paid by the Local Authorities, whereas the expenses of the seven Members of Parliament was £1,621, which fell on the Members. Did anyone suppose that if the Municipal Council of Glasgow had also to meet the official expenses of the Members for that city that their expenses would have been more than they were in the case of the Municipal Council? The outlay in such case would have been almost exactly the same. They had an illustration of that in London. The first year the cost of the London County Council election amounted to somewhere about £14,000, but since they had fixed the scale allowed for official expenses the expenses had decreased to between £8,000 and £9,000. This was not a Party question at all, and he was glad to find from the speeches that had been delivered that evening how unanimously in favour Members on both sides of the House were of the proposal that the official expenses should in future be paid out of public funds instead of by the candidates themselves. In 1886 there was a Bill introduced by the Government to settle this question with reference to Scotland, and in Committee an Instruction was carried by three to one in favour of the rates paying these expenses. That was not included in the Bill, and when the measure came back from another place the Schedule put in in the House of Commons had been taken from it. Notwithstanding that, the Sheriffs said they would only charge the rates in the Schedule of the Bill of 1886, although it was not attached to the Bill when it became an Act, and for that reason they had since then had a reduction of the official costs of Parliamentary elections in Scotland to something like one-half what they were before. He hoped that the House would agree to the Motion without a Division, this question not being in any sense a Party one.

MR. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) said, he entirely disagreed with the Resolution in whatever light it might be read—whether in the light the proposer had placed upon it or in that of the Chief Secretary. He entirely agreed that increased facilities should be given working men to enter this House, that the possession of wealth pure and simple should not be in itself in any way a special assistance to enter Parliament, and he also agreed that the official costs attendant on election ought to be, and he believed might be, considerably reduced. But he objected to the Motion, because they were only dealing with an infinitesimal portion of the costs attendant on election or the work of getting into this House. If their real object was to facilitate getting into this House on the part of those not well off they should do it by facing the question boldly, and not merely by charging on the Imperial Exchequer or local rates a portion of the expenditure, but by freeing candidates altogether from expenditure except with regard to personal expenditure. He submitted with confidence it was a mere farce to suggest they were going to facilitate working men becoming Members of this House by casting on the Imperial Exchequer or the local rates the Returning Officers' expenditure when the very Minister who had responded for the Government that night was himself responsible for a Bill which would unquestionably have this effect—that those men who were anxious to see that their constituencies were properly looked after would have to spend much more money in the future than they had done in the past; therefore, he said that to advance the Resolution on the score that they were helping working men to become Members of Parliament was to put the fact in by no means the light in which it ought to be presented. But he asked the House, before coming to any decision, to make up their minds what it was they were going to vote upon. The main part of the Resolution said that these expenses of the Returning Officers should be paid out of some fund other than those possessed by the candidate himself. The Resolution said distinctly that they should be defrayed out of public funds. What he wanted to ask the House was, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, did they regard local rates as public funds? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] They did. Then he submitted that if the proposer of the Resolution meant that these expenses should be paid out of the local rates he should have said so, and put it plainly in the Resolution. When he saw the Resolution, he inquired what were the proposals in this regard, and he was informed—not by the Mover, but by another hon. Member—that the proposal was to throw it upon the public funds. For his part, he believed that was only trifling with the question, but against it he had not the same objection as he had to any proposal to throw these expenses of Imperial elections upon local rates. He submitted that the average of the General Election was not a fair test to apply if the cost were to be thrown on the local rates. In the Cirencester Division of the County of Gloucester, for instance, his constituency had been put to the trouble of three elections in as many months, for no reasons which they could control. Was it fair that a constituency should be exposed to the risk of having to pay all those expenses? The House had a right to know whether the Government was definitely of opinion that these election expenses ought to be thrown on the local rates or paid out of Imperial funds, or whether they left the question open. He objected to the expenditure being thrown on Imperial funds, and did not believe that there was any demand for it. He did not think that even if the Imperial funds were made liable the deficiency would be made or the risks would be obviated; but that plan was not open to the same objections as the plan of making the rates liable. Hon. Members seemed to forget the professions they had made so loudly outside the House in favour of the ratepayers, to whom they extended so much sympathy. This was not a question whether the amount of the charges would be large or small, but whether the ratepayers were in a condition at the present time to bear extra burdens. After hon. Members had just been made acquainted with the deplorable condition of Essex, could they believe that that or any other agricultural county was in a position to bear any additional burden, however slight? He should certainly vote against any proposal which would still further increase the local rates.

*Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, the Mover of the Resolution had put the matter before the House in a very frank spirit. He had told them what was intended was to reduce the burden of expenses in connection with Parliamentary elections, and to place the Returning Officer's expenses on Public Funds, but he was willing to leave the question of the fund to be charged with election expenses open. Personally, he did not consider himself in any way pledged by anything said by the right hon. Member for Bury or by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He believed that the expenses ought to come out of Imperial funds, because Parliamentary elections were national elections, and the nation had as much obligation to bear the cost of them as boroughs had to defray the cost of municipal elections. Each ward of a borough had not to bear the cost of an election in that ward, but it was borne by the borough as a whole. Again, why should a constituency bear the cost of a re-election forced upon it by its Member accepting office in the Government? That was a strong point. At the same time, he could not get over the speech of the right hon. Member for Bury, and he wished to preserve an entirely open mind as to the fund out of which the expenses should ultimately come.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said, the Mover of the Resolution, like himself, represented an East End constituency. East End constituencies differed from others in this respect: they did not contain wealthy politicians who gave subscriptions to defray or reduce a candidate's expenses; and Members for East End constituencies knew that they dare not face their constituents with the proposal that their election expenses should be paid out of the rates. He felt it his duty, as representing an East London constituency, to protest against an increase of taxation in these poor localities, whose burdens were already so heavy by reason of County Council and School Board rates. ["Oh, oh!"] It was all very well for hon. Members to jeer at poor people, but the increased taxation that would be imposed upon them if these expenses were thrown upon the rates was more than they could possibly bear. He should have had no objection if the hon. Member for Finsbury had worded his Resolution that Parliamentary expenses should come out of the Consolidated Fund, but he had unfortunately left it an open question whether the expenditure must be met from that source or out of the ratepayers' pockets. He maintained that every Member of that House should do all in his power to prevent an increase of the rates by any such proposal; and, as representing an East End constituency, he must enter his emphatic protest against it. He should certainly vote against any proposition that the expenses of Parliamentary candidates should be thrown upon the rates. Would the hon. Member answer the plain question, whether he intended those expenses to come out of the rates or out of the Consolidated Fund?

*Mr. J. ROWLANDS said, the hon. Member would have heard it all if he had been present earlier, for it had all been distinctly stated in his opening speech.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON could only say that if the hon. Member stated frankly that he intended the expenses to be borne by the Consolidated Fund, he had no objection whatever, and would vote with him. If the Resolution were to be construed otherwise he should vote against it.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 39 ; Noes 166.—(Division List, No. 59.)

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Returning Officers' Expenses and all other Official Charges in connection with Parliamentary Elections should be defrayed out of public funds, and that a material reduction is possible in the present scale of charges allowed under "The Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers' Expenses) Act, 1875."

Supply,—Committee upon Monday next.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) BILL. (No. 191.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) BILL. (No. 192.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) BILL. (No. 193.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.—(No. 194.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.—(No. 163.)

As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 203.)

As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

### CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) (ABERDARE, &c., CANALS) BILL.—(No. 215.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (GAS) BILL.—(No. 226.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 227.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL.—(No. 228.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.—(No. 229.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.—(No. 230.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (POOR LAW) BILL.—(No. 232.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

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### STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir H. JAMES reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Mr. Stansfeld to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Mr. Arthur O'Connor: and that they had appointed Mr. Arthur O'Connor to act as Chairman for the consideration of Bills relating to Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: and that they had appointed Sir Matthew White Ridley to act as Chairman for the consideration of Bills committed to the Standing Committee (Scotland).

Report to lie upon the Table.

### SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

#### SCOTLAND.

Sir J. MOWBRAY reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Scotland:—

Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and Mr. Henry Hobhouse; and had appointed in substitution: Major Darwin and Mr. T. W. Russell.

### TRADE, &c.

SIR J. MOWBRAY further reported from the Committee; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures the following Fifteen Members in respect of the Notice of Accidents Bill:—Sir John Aird, Mr. Albert Bright, Mr. Bryce, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Condon, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Keir-Hardie, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Mather, Mr. D. R. Plunket, Mr. George Russell, Mr. T. H. Sidebottom, Mr. Wolff, Mr. Woods, and Mr. Wrightson.

### LAW, &c.

SIR J. MOWBRAY further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Bryce and Mr. Attorney General; and had appointed in substitution: Sir John Rigby and Mr. Hunter.

### TRADE, &c.

SIR J. MOWBRAY further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Solicitor General; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Robert Reid.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

### CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

Resolution of the House of the 8th day of May relative to Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills, which was ordered to be communicated to the Lords, and the Message from the Lords of the 10th day of May, signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution, read;

Ordered, That the following Bills be committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, nominated by the Committee of Selection, to be joined with a Committee of Five Lords:—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of Great Northern and other Railway Companies) Bill.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c., Canals) Bill.

Ordered, That all Petitions in favour of or against the Bills or Orders scheduled thereto presented five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard in favour of or against the Bills, and Counsel heard in support of the Bills.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to acquaint their Lordships that the said Bills have been committed to Five Members of this House, to be joined with a Committee of Five Lords, pursuant to the Resolution of the House relative to Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order Bills of the 8th day of May, and to the Message from the Lords of the 10th day of May signifying their concurrence in the said Resolution.—(*Mr. Burt.*)

## *MOTIONS.*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 17) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the County of Dorset ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 248.]

### POLITICAL OFFICES PENSION ACT (1869) REPEAL BILL.

On Motion of Mr. A. C. Morton, Bill to repeal "The Political Offices Pension Act, 1869," ordered to be brought in by Mr. A. C. Morton, Mr. William Allan, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Molloy, and Mr. Stewart Wallace.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 249.]

### WINE AND BEERHOUSE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Herbert Lewis, Bill to amend the Law relating to the licensing of Beerhouses and places for the sale of cider and wine by retail in England and Wales, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. Courtney, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Crosfield, Mr. Snape, and Mr. Herbert Roberts.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 250.]

### AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Channing, Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Agricultural Holdings in England and Wales; and for other purposes, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Channing, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Francis Stevenson, Mr. Lambert, Mr. Hugh Hoare, Mr. Billson, and Mr. Luttrell.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 251.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, 28th May 1894.*

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## NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Sir Charles Russell, G.C.M.G., late Her Majesty's Attorney General, having been appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary under the provisions of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, with the dignity of a Baron for life, by the style and title of Baron Russell of Killowen in the County of Down—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

## IRISH CHURCH FUND.

### POSTPONEMENT OF QUESTION.

The Earl of **BELMORE** postponed a question which he had placed on the Paper, to ask Her Majesty's Government, with respect to the Irish Church Fund Account, whether their attention had been called to the allegation which had been made that, owing to an alteration made in the Committee of the House of Commons whilst the Irish Church Act, 1869, was passing through that House, a miscalculation was made of the term of years in which the annuities representing tithe rent-charge would have repaid the principal sums commuted, with interest; and whether such full repayment would not have been made at the end of 46 instead of 52 years from the date of commutation in each case. He stated that at the request of the noble Earl on the Front Bench opposite he would put off the question to Monday next.

## TROUT FISHING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[H.L.].—(No. 49.)

### SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord **LAMINGTON**, in moving the Second Reading, said, the Bill was founded upon two previous Acts of Parliament, both of which rendered illegal certain means of taking trout out of the rivers and lochs of Scotland. The Bill had been promoted and drafted by the Lanarkshire Fishing Association and was supported by the West of Scotland Angling Association, both bodies representing the principal fishing and angling interests in that part of the country. They had gone to great expense in staking and improving the rivers with the view of increasing one of the most favourite means of recreation among Scotchmen, and it seemed a great shame that all their efforts should be nullified by the selfishness of some unsportsmanlike people. He knew of no serious objection except one which had been brought to his notice by people interested in salmon rivers. He had received a letter from a club at Berwick stating that the trout being the natural enemy of salmon fry it was desirable to destroy them, but he thought it necessary they should be protected as well as salmon. Some might think the close time was rather short, but he believed this Bill was only an instalment of what was desired by the Fishing Associations throughout Scotland.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read $2^a$."—(*The Lord Lamington.*)

The Marquess of **HUNTLY** had no wish to object to the Second Reading, but desired to point out that the noble Lord himself considered the close time rather too short. It was the general opinion that the 1st of March would be preferable to the 1st of February as the date fixed, because there was no doubt that trout were not in season until March. He therefore hoped that the noble Lord would consider, before the Committee stage was reached, whether the close time might not be extended to the 1st of March.

Lord **LAMINGTON** said, the matter had, he thought, been carefully considered by all the Fishing Clubs in Scotland, and he supposed there must be different circumstances affecting different rivers with regard to the commencement of the fishing season. He imagined they had fixed this date in order to avoid opposition.

Motion agreed to: Bill read $2^a$ accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

## PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

### CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS.

Message from the Commons, That they have appointed a Committee to consist of five Members, to join with a Committee of this House, to consider the following Bills, viz.:—Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of Great Northern and other Railway Companies) Bill; Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c. Canals) Bill; Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdeen, &c. Canals) Bill; and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House.

### MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT (1887) AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Merchandise Marks Act of 1887, and to compel the marking of all imported goods—Was presented by the Earl of Denbigh; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 66.)

### PERJURY BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to perjury and kindred offences—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 67.)

### COMMISSIONERS OF WORKS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 68.)

### MUSIC AND DANCING LICENCES (MIDDLESEX) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 69.)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 6) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 70.)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 6) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 71.)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 7) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 72.)

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 8) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners (No. 73.)

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered To-morrow, in order to its being dispensed with for that day's Sitting.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Ordered, That the Evening Sitting tomorrow do commence at a quarter past Four o'clock.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till to-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, 28th May 1894.*

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### THAMES CONSERVANCY BILL (*by Order*).

### COMMITTEE.

*Sir T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock) said, he desired to move,

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Thames Conservancy Bill that they have power to insert in the Bill, if they think fit, provisions for authorising the Conservancy to dredge the portions of the River Thames and the estuary thereof below Yantlet Creek, in the County of Kent."

In proposing it he wished to point out that the Instruction dealt with a question of considerable importance, inasmuch as the Bill conferred a new constitution and new powers which would be effectually to give to the Thames Conservators a mandate which could not be altered or amended for a long time to come. It was therefore only natural that the shipowners, who were the largest contributors to the revenue of the Thames Conservancy, should desire to be assured that the provisions now intended to be made for the maintenance and improvement of the Port of London would be adequate not merely for the present but for some years to come, especially in view of the rapid increase in the size of vessels. In this respect the great desideratum was a proper depth of water for vessels of the largest size. Yet this most vital matter was totally ignored in the Bill. It might, perhaps, be argued that the powers of the Thames Conservancy Board would remain exactly as they were 30 or 40 years ago. But he begged leave to point out that a great change had come over the Port of London since those powers were granted. He would mention two facts only to show this. Within the last 20 years the tonnage of foreign-going shipping frequenting the Port had increased 100 per cent.—namely, from 7,000,000 to 14,000,000 of tons. In the character and size of ships the change was even more marked. Within the past 10 years the number of vessels of over 3,000 tons burden had increased by 200 per cent. Under these circumstances, it was obvious that the duty was imposed on the Thames Conservancy of keeping pace with the times, and to see that proper facilities were given to the shipping by work in the direction indicated in his Instruction. Large vessels experienced great inconvenience and no little risk on account of the shoal condition of the Thames, especially in the vincinity of the Nore, a vicinity which was popularly considered to be part of the Nore, although some hundred years ago it was considered to be outside the river boundaries. It would perhaps surprise hon. Members if he informed them that for 10 miles below the docks it was impossible to find a safe anchorage for the largest ships frequenting the river, on account of the shallowness of the channel, and these vessels were exposed to the greatest possible risk, especially during the winter months when fogs were prevalent. If a large vessel happened from any cause, accidental or otherwise, not to hit off the right moment for docking, she was obliged to retrace her course to Gravesend, and there wait for the next tide. His Instruction dealt specifically with the shoaled condition of the mouth of the Thames. The charts of 1892-3 showed that in some places there were only some 19 feet of water at that part of the river, while the charts of 20 years ago indicated, at the same spots, a greater depth, thus showing absolutely that a gradual silting up had been going on. This was a matter for the gravest consideration of the Committee. The evidence tendered by the shipping interest had been rejected simply because the entrance to the River Thames near the Nore was not within the geographical area dealt with in the provisions of the Bill before the Committee. It was therefore absolutely necessary to come that day to the House to ask for this Instruction. It was their contention that the scope of the Bill ought to be widened, and the authorities responsible for the maintenance of the Port ought to have their jurisdiction extended to the mouth of the river, which was the key of the whole situation. It was essential that this should be done in the interests of the future welfare of the Port. He was sorry to think that those interested in the Thames Conservancy were vigorously opposing the Instruction. If they opposed it on the plea of poverty, he would point out that the shipping interest were not to blame for that, seeing that for many years they had contributed between £40,000 and £50,000 a year for the improvement of the Port of London, though nothing like this amount had been expended for that purpose. Last year the accounts of the Thames Conservancy Board showed that only £10,000 or £11,000 was spent in dredging the channel or the approaches to the river, and the Board had, in fact, been obtaining from the shipping industry of the Port large sums of money which had not been expended for the purpose. He hoped it was not the case that there was some official resistance to this Motion, because if it were he could only suggest that it partook very much of the nature of the resistance of the Egyptian Government to reduction of the light dues. That Government seemed to have retained dues which they were improperly obtaining from British shipping. In the same way the Thames Conservancy had been improperly obtaining money for the improvement of the Port of London, while they had failed to expend it on the improvement of the Port. If shipowners were to be called on for further taxation, it should be accompanied by larger representation. At the present time, while the pecuniary contribution of the shipping interest to the Thames Conservancy amounted to something like 50 or 60 per cent. of the total income, their share of representation was only one in 14, or about 7 per cent. The important point which the Motion for the present Instruction opened up was, whether a new lease of power was to be given to the Thames Conservancy under a Bill which ignored the duty of improving the Port of London? If the evidence which the shipping industry were seeking to tender did not prove their case, then the Thames Conservancy would have the strongest reason for ignoring the matter as they had done. If, on the other hand, they proved their case, as he believed they would up to the hilt, the duty of the Board would be clear. He could not imagine that such a proposal could be opposed on any ground of public policy. There was absolutely no other course open to him except that which he was now pursuing, as it was impossible to discuss the Bill upon the Second Reading. If it were suggested that this great matter ought to be dealt with by means of a separate Bill and that it ought to be preceded by a Select Committee of Inquiry, his reply was that if this course were adopted the result would be to shelve a question of the most vital importance to the interests of the Port of London. He had not spoken of the Thames Conservancy in any unfriendly spirit, but he thought that, in view of the efforts that were being made by the authorities even of many of the minor ports in the United Kingdom to meet the requirements of the time and of the efforts that were being made by rivals on the Continent, especially at Antwerp, which was being made a grander and better Port than London, the Thames Conservancy had but little to boast of in connection with their present position and had yet much to accomplish in order to make the Port of London worthy of the great Metropolis to which it belonged. He begged to move the Instruction of which he had given notice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Thames Conservancy Bill that they have power to insert in the Bill, if they think fit, provisions for authorising the Conservancy to dredge portions of the River Thames and the estuary thereof below Yantlet Creek, in the County of Kent."—(*Sir T. Sutherland.*)

*SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said, he had been unable to gather from the speech just delivered a single reason why the proposed Instruction should be adopted, inasmuch as the Bill had no connection whatever with the dredging of the river below a certain point. The Bill had already been before the Committee a great number of days. It was a Bill containing over 300 clauses, and it was too late to introduce into it a new duty which it would be utterly beyond the power of the Thames Conservancy Board to perform. He opposed the Instruction on behalf of the Thames Conservancy on two grounds—first, because it was an attempt to evade the Standing Orders of the House; and, secondly, on its merits. The Bill had been brought in by order of the House itself under a clause in the London County Council's Bill of last year, in which notice was distinctly given that the Conservators were to bring in a Bill this year and get it passed into law. It was provided that in case the Conservators did not do this the London County Council were to have a right to bring in a Bill next year. The question referred to in the proposed Instruction was a very large and grave one, and one that would require the most careful examination and consideration. A very large quantity of expert evidence would also have to be taken with regard to it. It was a question whether the natural bed of the river could be altered. As a very long investigation would be required, the adoption of the Instruction would have the effect of preventing the Bill passing into law this year, and the result would be that the whole of the expense and trouble which had been incurred would be thrown away. This was not the only case in which a claim of this kind had been made. The Preston authorities some time ago wanted to have the Ribble dredged in the same way as it was proposed to dredge the mouth of the Thames now. The question was brought before the Board of Trade, who went into the subject and appointed three Commissioners, who sat, he believed, no fewer than 21 days, and presented a Report of 27 pages to the Board of Trade. On that Report, which was favourable to the proposal, the Board of Trade ordered that the Corporation of Preston should bring in a separate Bill. The Bill was brought in, was thoroughly threshed out, and became an Act of Parliament in 1892. The Thames Conservancy said that this question ought to be treated in the same way. Of course, the Conservators did not want to do anything that would prevent the free passage of vessels into the Port of London, but the object which the hon. Member (Sir T. Sutherland) wished to attain ought to be pursued under proper conditions, which were not secured by this Bill. There were 93 Petitions against this Bill, and not one of them alleged that the Thames was silting up. He himself had examined the map, and he could only find one place in which the depth of the water was as little as 19 feet, and that was quite close to the shore. The hon. Member had spoken about the money of the Thames Conservators being spent upon the upper part of the river. He should like to know what the State of the lower part of the river would be if nothing was spent on the upper part? The question of expense was also an important one. He was told by engineers that it was a very moot point whether the river could be dredged in the way suggested, because it was said that, owing to the tides, if it were dredged to-day it would silt up to-morrow. Supposing, however, that the dredging could be carried out, the dredging machinery would cost something like £80,000, and in all probability a sum of £40,000 a year would have to be spent whilst the dredging went on. It would be a very nice thing for the shipowners if they had the channel dredged for them at the public expense. They did not find there was any proposal on their part to pay any of the expenses. He had no hesitation in saying that this Instruction was an attempt to wreck the Bill, and if it were adopted the Bill would not pass, and their whole work would be thrown away. If a new Bill were brought in next Session under proper conditions the Thames Conservancy would have no objection to support it, and then the proper machinery and proper funds could be arranged to carry the matter through. The shipowners who had their representatives on the Thames Conservancy Board when the Bill was before the Board never brought up the question at all, and when they came before the Committee they tried to introduce into the Bill clauses which they had not the power to then introduce, which ought to have been properly advertised in October and November last, so that the public might see what they were doing. This matter was introduced when the Committee had nearly finished the Bill, and it was an attempt, apparently at the eleventh hour, to wreck the Bill. The Thames Conservancy Board contended that the Bill should be passed in its present state by the Committee, and a proper inquiry should be made into this question next year. The Thames Conservancy would introduce a fresh supplemental Bill if necessary, but it ought to be brought in with the proper machinery, and then there would be no objection to doing anything that was reasonable. He hoped the House would not pass the Instruction, because, however desirable it might be in itself, it was utterly at variance with the present Bill of the Thames Conservancy, was outside its powers, and contrary to the rule of the Standing Orders of the House of Commons.

*Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, this matter was of extreme importance to the Port of London and Members representing London on that side of the House, and he believed some on the other side would join in heartily supporting the Instruction moved by the hon. Member for Greenock. The speech made by the hon. Member who had last spoken had really been a speech against the Third Reading of the Bill. They had shown the insufficiency of this Bill to meet the great needs of the Port of London. When the Bill was introduced and read a second time, it was his duty, speaking on behalf of the County Council of London, to say they did not oppose the Bill at that stage, because it was brought in statutably, and because they should be glad to see whether it could not be improved in Committee in the direction needed; but he indicated that it would be their duty to oppose the Bill at a later stage if it failed, as completely as they conceived it did, to meet the great purpose it was intended to meet. The Thames Conservancy had, under this Bill, taken large and extended powers over the tributaries of the Thames, and over the whole of the Thames Valley, far above Oxford and in various directions—powers extended laterally, in order to prevent the river from pollution, which they heartily approved of the Conservancy Board obtaining. These powers had been considered before the Committee, which was willing to grant them to the Thames Conservancy. But there were interests even more important to London than the pollution of the Thames, for they looked to obtain their water from other sources. The interests of the Port of London were as vital to London, and the population of London was as interested in the success of the Port of London as anything else connected with the river. The government of London had been in a state of chaos for 50 years, one consequence of which had been that the Conservancy Board extended for only 40 miles below London Bridge, the remaining 10 miles not being under the Thames Conservancy. That portion of the river, therefore, remained undredged, and it was to that portion the present Instruction referred. What they said was that if the Thames Conservancy Board had acted properly by the whole Port of London it would have introduced into their Bill measures for extending the Conservancy over the last 10 miles of the river. The hon. Baronet said that this Bill should pass through as it stood, or with such Amendments as the Committee might introduce, and that this should not be introduced in the present measure. He asked the House to remember the circumstances under which this measure was introduced last year. The County Council proposed to bring in a Bill to deal with the Thames Conservancy, and a compromise was taken on the basis that a complete and comprehensive measure ought to be brought in dealing with the whole subject in which the question of representation should also be dealt with, and the question of representation was ruled at that period as one not to be dealt with fully at the time, and the Conservancy Board was ordered to bring in a Bill on the present occasion dealing with the whole subject. They had brought in a Bill now; but by what the Member for Greenock had said that Bill was by no means comprehensive, or one which dealt with the whole subject, and to pass this fraction of a Bill, and to leave it till next year for the Conservancy Board to bring in another Bill dealing with the most important part of the whole question, was to contravene the Order of the Act of Parliament passed last Session, and to deal with it in a wholly insufficient and unsatisfactory manner. The ground on which this Bill was brought in was undoubtedly that there should be a more representative Board, and if they were going to construct the Board on the basis of the Bill as it at present stood, without having any reference to such great and widespread interests involved in such an Instruction as this, they should construct a Board inadequate for the proper government and management of the River Thames. The fact was, that the Conservancy, in introducing this Bill, had altogether fallen short of the great duty before them. They had altogether failed to see the huge interests involved, and the great opportunity that it offered for dealing satisfactorily with the Conservancy of the River Thames—not only in omitting such portions of the duty of the Conservancy as this referred to in the Instruction, and upon which the safety and prosperity of the Port of London really greatly depended—but also in the inadequate changes that had been introduced in the formation of the Board itself, which ought to be placed on a thoroughly representative footing, which ought to represent the population of the banks of the Thames and in the Thames Valley proportionately, and which ought to deal with the upper and the lower branches of the river—which were so distinctly different in their requirements by separate Statutable Committees of the Board suitable for dealing with the circumstances of each. What had the inhabitants of the upper reaches of the river to do really with the prosperity of the Port of London in any direct manner? There ought to be a Statutable Committee to deal with the upper reaches of the river, and another to deal with all that concerned that part of the river which constituted the Port of London, and these two Committees, of one thoroughly representative Board, would work in a proper manner for the different interests concerned on the Thames. They wanted to have some comprehensive scheme like that introduced, and they wanted to have a proper system of finance introduced into the Bill. The present Conservancy had not got enough money to carry out the duties they were imposing upon themselves even in the present Bill, and their funds were wholly insufficient to enable them to discharge the new duties he had indicated. Where were the funds to come from? The Board could never get adequate funds until it became a body representative of the population along the whole Thames Valley, which might be empowered if necessary to put a rate on property affected. The Bill fell short in these points, and if the insertion of this Instruction led to awakening the Conservancy, and those who represented them, before the Committee, to the necessity of carrying out these great points, then they should have done well by carrying the Instruction. If it should postpone the Bill—and he could not for a single moment see why it should do so—all he could say was that it was better that the Bill should be postponed than that it should be carried through this House under the circumstances indicated so ably by the hon. Member for Greenock. He denied that there was any necessity for putting off this Bill on account of carrying the Instruction, and he appealed to the House to insist on securing an adequate measure, so that they should obtain now and finally a proper Conservancy Board representative of the population interested, with proper financial support and proper powers to make the Port of London the Port it ought to be in this Kingdom.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) confessed that, after listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Shoreditch, he was led somewhat to the conclusion that the hon. Member would not be very sorry if the Bill did not succeed. He should have been more impressed if such an impassioned—not to say violent—speech had been made by one not so strictly connected with the County Council, and when he remembered that this Bill was introduced by virtue of a pledge given to the County Council, and upon a compromise by which it must be got through this year, he ventured to think it would not be fair to the promoters of the Bill if the agitation was to take place now which commenced at the earlier stage of the Bill. He contrasted the speech of the hon. Member for Shoreditch with the speech of the hon. Member for Greenock, who certainly did not seem to desire to put the Instruction except on its true ground—namely, that of the improvement of the Port and the interests of the shipowners. What did the hon. Member for Shoreditch say? He desired to deal with the whole scheme of both the constitution and policy of the Conservancy Board. The hon. Member said there ought to be two Committees—one for the upper and one for the lower Thames, a new scheme of finance, and, finally, that there ought to be other and better representation of the shipowners on the Conservancy Board. But if he was correctly informed this important question of representation was before the Committee at the present time. What he wanted to know was what had the questions of representation, finance, and two Committees to do with the Instruction of the hon. Member for Greenock? It was perfectly plain that the speech they had just listened to was intended to lead the House to the belief that there were grounds, quite apart from this Instruction, why the Bill ought not to be passed, and if that line of argument were to be taken it seemed to him it would not be quite keeping good faith with the promoters of the Bill. He desired to say a word or two upon the merits of the Instruction, and he hoped the Government would be good enough to state what course they proposed to adopt. He did not think he should be accused of want of sympathy with the shipowners, and the hon. Member for Greenock would be the first to admit that from the point of view of improving the Port or enabling large ships to enter it, he (Sir R. Webster) would do all he could to assist. But he could assure the House that the question of dredging the Estuary of the Thames was not a subject to be undertaken with a light heart, and he did not hesitate to say from some experience in connection with these matters in other parts, that a scheme for dredging the Thames for seven miles below Yantlet Creek was not one which should be undertaken until after the fullest scientific investigation and that proper consideration which this House required when Private Bills of this class were promoted. He was not putting this on grounds of technicality. The Standing Orders contemplated that the notices issued in November should contain an outline of schemes of this character, and that plans should be given indicating the area in which it was proposed to do the work. He was not arguing the case on technical grounds, but on the ground that such a proposal ought only to be undertaken by any Public Body after the fullest investigation and the most careful inquiry that could be given to it. He would remind the House that views had been taken of the Estuary of the Thames before, which, on investigation, had turned out to be entirely fallacious. What was the present position of the Bill? They were in the month of May, and he was told that this Bill had been 16 days before the Committee already, and of 93 Petitions not one single one had raised this point, and he did not think it was a fair thing to the Conservators to raise this question now, when there were these various and vast number of interests involved, and it did not occur to anyone to bring forward this as a matter of substance. What would happen if this Instruction were adopted? He believed the Member for Greenock did not desire unduly to fetter the action of the Conservators; but if the Instruction were adopted, there must be scientific evidence and inquiries, and on the most moderate estimate; even if proceeded with forthwith, there would be an inquiry of 10 or 12 extra days. Counsel would have to be heard in support of the case for the Instruction, and if a *primâ facie* case was made for it there would not only have to be an adjournment, but after consideration as to who ought to be allowed to appear on the matter, because it must not be supposed there were no interests involved in such a question as dredging the lower part of the river. But in any view the position would be this: the Bill would probably be ruined, and certainly ruined for this Session if this Instruction were passed. He would remind the House that the scheme and object of the present Bill was the consolidation of the powers of the Thames Conservancy Board and the better regulation of the powers which now existed, and it did seem to him a strong measure at the last moment to introduce an Instruction which would extend the jurisdiction over a geographical area they had not got. If this were absolutely a case of a clean sheet, and this was a Bill introduced without any fettering conditions—if there was not a suggestion of a suspicion that the County Council would not be sorry if this Bill did not pass, then there might be strong grounds for contending that the House ought not at this stage to agree to such Instruction. But he submitted to the House with all deference that in the matter of such a Bill, having such a purpose, and having regard to the present conditions, it would be unjust to interfere with the arrangement made, for if this extremely lengthened inquiry were to be entered upon it was certain there must be long and anxious criticism of the evidence, and possibly the House or the Committee upstairs would not be completely informed of the matter because of the want of preparation. He hoped the Instruction would not be passed.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, the hon. and learned Gentleman had put forward the difficulties which might result if this Instruction were carried, but he should, nevertheless, vote for the Instruction, because he thought it would be well to take whatever evidence the shipping interests of London had to offer before the Committee, in order that it might be ascertained what steps should be taken with a view to effecting any improvements to the Port of London. He cordially agreed with the hon. Member for Shoreditch as to the advisability of dividing the work of the Thames Conservancy Board. He would ask hon. Members who represented the counties through which the Thames flowed in the upper part whether it would not be as well for them as for the Port of London to divide the river into two portions, and put each of these portions under the care of a separate authority? It was quite clear that certain of these counties had very little concern indeed with the Port of London, and the great difficulty of representation would be got over if two authorities were created which should govern the river from its source to its mouth. If the Port of London were put under the care of one authority there would be very little difficulty in giving the shipowners and population of London a proper proportion of representation, but when they had to take into consideration all the counties that were concerned in the upper part of the river the difficulty of giving representation to the shipping interests of London became very great. The two parts of the river were quite different. The upper part might be looked upon as a source of drinking water for the people of London, whereas the lower part of it was not at all like the other part, and ought to be in the hands of those who were interested in it and knew all about it. He therefore supported the Instruction.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.) opposed the Instruction in the first place because he regarded it as not necessary, and in the second place because it would adversely affect the interests of the sailors and fishermen who plied their trade in the Estuary of the Thames and the North Sea. The Instruction was promoted by that august body the London County Council, and it appeared they were anxious that the Thames Conservancy should be compelled to dredge the area indicated. This particular area was the part of the Estuary of the Thames which supplied the East End of London with cheap fish. The fishermen on that part of the river sent up to Billingsgate various kinds of fish, and if the area of supply from this part of the river was restricted the East End of London would suffer very considerably, and his constituents, the sailors who plied their trade in the Estuary of the Thames and in the North Sea, would have the bread taken out of their mouths. These sailors were some of the best seamen in the country. This area was also practically cultivated as if it was almost a market garden. This was not the first time by any means that he and his constituents had been tried in this way. The Estuary of the Thames for the last five years had been by no means a bed of roses to himself or constituents. About four years ago it occurred to the intelligence of the Board of Admiralty that they would dredge a channel from Sheerness to Chatham in order to allow the passage of big ships up and down the Medway, and it occurred to them as a happy thought to lump all the mud from the dredging on to the fishing grounds of the Essex fishermen, precisely as the Thames Conservancy Board would do if the Instruction of the hon. Baronet opposite was accepted by the House. Again, a short time ago the London County Council commenced to dump sewage matter on to the fishing grounds precisely as the Admiralty used to do with the dredgings, their fishing grounds comprising the very area now under discussion. They did not want that kind of thing to happen again. They had induced the County Council to abate the nuisance, and they did not desire that it should commence again with the Thames Conservancy. If this Instruction were passed, it would be putting his constituents out of the frying-pan into the fire. He knew this district thoroughly, and he could assure the hon. Member for Greenock that he never heard of a single instance of a ship being delayed in her passage up and down the river, or any complaint of the river being too shallow. If the House did pass the Instruction, he hoped that, at any rate, his constituents would be given the opportunity of placing their evidence before the Committee upstairs as to the damage likely to be done to them. He opposed the Instruction, which he asked the House not to pass.

*SIR E. HILL (Bristol, S.) said that, as he deemed the question to be of general and not merely local interest, although he was not a Metropolitan Member, he proposed to say a few words in support of the Instruction. He would not enter into technicalities—either engineering or Parliamentary—still less would he discuss the composition or efficiency of the Thames Conservancy Board. He would not weary the House by any statement as to the national importance of the shipping interest, as that was well known, but it was undoubtedly patent to everyone that if the shipping was to find its way to the Port of London it was necessary that accommodation should be provided, as was done in the case of the Tees and other large rivers. This was the more needful, as the size of vessels was constantly increasing. If the Instruction were to direct the Thames Conservancy to dredge this channel he could understand the objections that had been urged against it, but the fact was that it was an Instruction to the Committee to insert in the Bill, if they thought fit to do so, a certain provision authorising the Thames Conservancy to dredge certain portions of the River Thames. There was no Instruction that they should do so, and he never before heard of a Public Body refusing to have powers which they were not compelled to exercise, and he could not see why they should do so in this instance. In the interests of the public, of shipping, and in the best interests of the Port of London, he intended to support the Instruction.

*MR. MOULTON (Hackney, S.) said, he did not wish to delay the House, and should not have intervened if it had not been to make clear the attitude which the London County Council had taken up in this matter. In the first place, let him give the most direct denial to the insinuations that this Instruction came from the

London County Council; it arose, he believed, from the fact that the evidence on this point was rejected by the Committee sitting upon the Bill, and accordingly the shipowners, without any consultation with the London County Council, prepared this Instruction. Although the London County Council had nothing to do with the origin of this, they gave their heartiest support to it for these reasons—reasons which he thought they had no cause to be ashamed of. Their one aim, both in the Bill brought in last year and in the present proceeding, was that the whole of the Thames should be in the hands of a strong Representative Body, to which could be safely entrusted those powers of finance which alone could make the Conservancy effective, and they felt with regard to this Bill, that although there might be a most valuable inquiry, no solution of the problem could by any possibility be come to, because it was impossible under the present Bill to supply the Thames Conservancy with the funds absolutely necessary to carry out its duties properly. The consequence was, that they looked on this Bill as one that might regulate the jurisdiction and the powers of the new body and which might regulate its constitution, but which could not complete the question of settling what the Thames Conservancy was to be, for it could not settle the question of finance. Accordingly, they were most anxious that in all questions of jurisdiction the inquiry should be full, so that everything that related to the Thames should be put in the hands of this body. They were also anxious that the constitution of this body should be rightly framed, that it should be representative, that it should be of such standing that they might get the best men upon it, and that the public might not shrink from trusting it even with powers of rating. But they knew that completion could not take place this year. What, then, was their attitude towards this Instruction? They felt that the extra jurisdiction the shipowners desired, and which was vital to the interests of London, should be in the hands of the same powerful, and, as they hoped, rich body which would manage all other Thames questions and carry out effectively their aims. Though they admitted that this Bill could not be final, they desired that it should add this important function to the jurisdiction of the Thames Conservancy in anticipation of the time when its constitution, jurisdiction, and resources should be finally settled. If that were done, they might be able to persuade the Legislature to endow it with proper funds. For all these reasons, he believed the County Council unanimously supported this Instruction, which he begged the House to accede to.

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) wished to disabuse his hon. and learned Colleague opposite of the views under which he laboured, that the London County Council unanimously supported this Instruction. He opposed it solely and exclusively because he had the honour to be a member of the London County Council, and he desired to purge the body of which it was his privilege to be a member from a charge of breach of faith in connection with the Thames Conservancy Board. This Bill, whatever its merits or demerits, was introduced into this House in fulfilment of a compact and understanding which was brought about very much through the influence of his right hon. Friend who formerly occupied the position of the President of the Local Government Board, and he regretted that many members of the London County Council gave support to an Instruction that would altogether overthrow a Bill that had been brought in. In his opinion, it was the reverse of straightforward.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said there had been a breach of faith with regard to this Bill. He (Mr. Rowlands) had the honour of a seat on the Committee last year, and he said most deliberately that the solution of the difficulty which arose with regard to the recommendations of the majority of that Committee was this: that the Thames Conservancy should bring in a Bill that would grapple with the whole question of the management of the Thames with regard to the upper reaches right down to the Port of London.

*SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND said, the arrangement was to bring in a Bill to consolidate the powers of the Conservancy, and not to increase them.

MR. J. ROWLANDS: I said to the mouth of the river.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND: That is what I object to.

**Mr. J. ROWLANDS** said, he heard the whole of the evidence, and the one question put before them as to why nothing of a practical nature could be done was that there were no real funds at the disposal of the Thames Conservancy to manage the river. He believed in this Bill they did put an extra charge of some £10,000 a year upon the Water Companies. One thing was certain: that before there could be a thorough management of the great river on which they depended so much, there must be finances at the disposal of the Conservancy for the purposes of administration. The reason he was going to vote for the Instruction was because it was thoroughly permissive. What the hon. Member for Greenock (Sir T. Sutherland) desired was that it should be an Instruction to the Committee to insert, if they thought fit, provisions authorising the Conservancy to dredge certain portions of the river. He did not think the House ought to refuse the demand made by the hon. Member, which was made in the shipping interest, in regard to which the hon. Member was acknowledged as an authority. The hon. Member who represented one of the divisions of Essex had told them what was the interest of the fishermen in his constituency, but there was a large portion of the river on the Essex coast that could not be dredged under any circumstances.

**Major RASCH** said, his objection was that they put the dredgings upon their fishing beds.

**Mr. J. ROWLANDS** said, that could not be done within a mile and a quarter of the Southend Pier, which had to be run out for a mile and a half to enable steamers to land passengers. Considering the evidence laid before the Committee upstairs, he thought the House would be stultifying itself if it did not give the hon. Member for Greenock (Sir T. Sutherland) this permissive Instruction he asked for.

**Sir A. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.) hoped this question would be viewed from a wider standpoint than the interests in cockles and mussels advocated by the hon. and gallant Member for Essex (Major Rasch). If the hon. Member for Greenock and the County Council joined in urging this proposal, it seemed to him that everyone identified with the commerce of the City was bound to support it, and to endeavour to secure for the Conservancy adequate powers to deal both with the upper and the lower reaches, each of which was dependent on the other. If he understood the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Sir F. Dixon-Hartland) aright, he spoke of the improvement of the upper river.

**Sir F. DIXON-HARTLAND**: I never did anything of the kind.

**Sir A. ROLLIT** said, in that case he had mistaken the somewhat ambiguous remarks the hon. Member made on the subject. The feeling in London, and especially in shipping circles, with regard to the condition of the river was that, if the character and prosperity of the Port were to be maintained, something must be done, and done quickly. The constantly-increasing tendency to build large ships rendered this absolutely necessary. This question must be viewed in the light of the action of competitive ports, both in this country and abroad. The authorities at the Humber, at Antwerp, and at Hamburg were, by improving the facilities of access, endeavouring to increase the interest of these ports at the expense of the Port of London. If the House neglected the duty of making the Thames as accessible as possible under all conditions they would do a great injury to the chief Port of this country.

**Sir R. TEMPLE** (Surrey, Kingston) said that, as a Surrey Member, he wished to say one word, and it was this: that if this Instruction were passed to-day it would simply be fatal to the Bill for this Session, and that, under the circumstances, would render the ultimate passing of the Bill impossible; and he believed that some who advocated this Instruction were perfectly well aware of that. He wished to say a word on the commercial interests of this question. The question might be, as described by his hon. Friends the Members for Greenock, Bristol, and Islington, one of great importance to the shipping and commercial interests, but, if so, let them be provided for by a separate Bill, and let the inquiry be now set on foot. If his hon. Friend, who had just spoken, was so thoroughly convinced of that he would ask whether he did not mention it before?

**Sir A. ROLLIT**; I beg the hon. Baronet's pardon, but this matter has been brought before shipping and commercial circles for many years past, and has been thoroughly advocated.

SIR R. TEMPLE asked why the hon. Member had not mentioned it in the House of Commons upon the various stages of this Bill? The hon. Gentleman said the duty must be done by the Port of London; then let the duty be now undertaken, let the inquiry be set on foot and a separate Bill introduced, but do not tack on to a Bill an Instruction that would destroy that Bill. Therefore, in the vital interests of Surrey, he entreated the Government not to favour this proposal, and he would ask the House, in the interest of those who sent him there, to allow a Bill that had been read a second time and referred to a Committee, whose investigations were all but completed, to pass a Third Reading.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I do not know that this is a matter in which the Government are bound, as a Government, to take any part. All I shall say is that, having listened to this Debate, I confess I think the speech just made by the hon. Member for South Islington (Sir A. Rollit) is one that convinces me that this Instruction is one that ought to be adopted. It is obviously a very large question, and not one that can be decided, as the last speaker seems to think, with a view to the interests of his constituents in that picturesque part of the Thames Valley which he represents. It must be regarded from the great interests which the Thames represents as the Port of the commerce of the City of London. I understand the proposal to be a request that the shipping interest shall be allowed to place their views before the Committee. As to the interests in this matter, I cannot conceive how a demand of that kind can be resisted. I do not enter into the question of the antagonistic views that may arise between the majority and the minority on the County Council of London; but the fact that the County Council of London, the representatives of the Metropolis and the great commercial interests, and the still larger interests of the commerce of the Empire, support this Instruction is enough to personally induce me to vote in favour of the Instruction.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 269; Noes 112.—(Division List, No. 60.)

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### ARMY SCHOOLMASTERS' PENSIONS.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, as the time spent in education at the Staff College at Kneller Hall and at Hythe counts towards pension, the same privilege can be extended to Army schoolmasters going through their course of training at the Royal Military Asylum in those cases in which they were soldiers before entering upon the course?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): The training schools at the Royal Military Asylum have been abolished since 1888. Soldiers in training for the appointment of schoolmaster now pass one year in Army schools, and this year's service is counted towards pension.

### WORKMEN'S TICKETS.

MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can inform the House to what extent Railway Companies issue cheap workmen's tickets on the terms that if they are killed or injured on the line the Company is not to be responsible or liable; and, if not, whether the Home Office will procure the information in the form proposed by the Return asked for, or in some similar form?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BURT, Morpeth): The Board of Trade have not the information to enable them to answer my hon. and learned Friend's question, and they feel that it is unreasonable that they should press the Railway Companies for a Return. The tickets would appear to be in the nature of contracts between the Companies and passengers in return for facilities specially conceded, and they are quite distinct from any matter in regard to which the Board of Trade have administrative functions in connection with Railway Companies. I am, of course, unable to answer for the Home Office.

MR. DODD: Am I to understand that the Board of Trade declines or is unable to procure the necessary information?

**Mr. BURT**: They think it would not be reasonable to press the Railway Companies to make such a Return.

**Mr. DODD**: Under these circumstances, I shall take an opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the matter.

### COMMUNICATION WITH THE WEST COAST OF ROSS-SHIRE.

**Mr. WEIR** (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that there is only weekly communication by steamer with Ullapool, Aultbea, Poolewe, and other populous districts on the west coast of the mainland of Ross-shire; and that transit by road, a distance of upwards of 30 miles to the nearest railway station, is so costly as to seriously affect the fishing industry; whether more frequent steamer communication will be provided; and whether he will consider the desirability of introducing, as in the West of Ireland, light railways or road trams in these districts?

**The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND** (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The whole population of Western Ross-shire, extending over a tract of 624,000 acres, is 11,400 A yearly subsidy of £7,000 is granted for steamer service in the Western Highlands and Islands, and vessels touch once a week at Ullapool and thrice a week at Gairloch. Both places have a daily mail service by railway and coach. The Scottish Office is not prepared to recommend an increase of this subsidy, nor do I see my way at present to ask the assistance of the Treasury towards the establishment of light railways or road trams in these districts.

**Mr. WEIR**: Has not a very large sum been spent on the Island of Lewis?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Yes, a good deal has been done for that island.

### FLANNAN ISLANDS LIGHTHOUSE.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, having regard to the fact that the Northern Lights Commissioners have recommended the erection of a lighthouse on the Flannan Islands, and that the Board of Trade have sanctioned the same, he will state if plans and estimates have been prepared; and, if so, the estimated cost; and whether, seeing that the Flannan Islands are a serious danger to vessels trading between America and Great Britain, a portion of the £51,000 provided in this year's Estimates to the Mercantile Marine Fund will be used in starting the preliminary work during the summer months?

**Mr. BURT** (who replied) said: No, Sir; the plans and estimates have not been prepared. As soon as the state of the Mercantile Marine allows it, the erection of the lighthouse will be commenced; but, at present, that fund is not in a condition to bear such outlay.

### HARBOURS IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether, in view of the fact that Portnaguran, in the Point district of the Island of Lewis, was specially recommended by the Highlands and Islands Commission as standing greatly in need of a boat-slip, pier, or harbour, and that up to the present time nothing has been done, steps will be taken to give effect to the recommendation of the Commission?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: Portnaguran is one of the three places recommended by the Commission for larger harbours in Lewis, but they remark that there is considerable difference of opinion as to the site. Of the other two, one at Carloway has been finished. The other at Port Ness is under construction. It has not yet been found possible to commence a harbour at Portnaguran, the cost of which is estimated at £30,000. In addition to these, three minor harbours are being constructed from Government funds this season in Lewis. One of them at Portnambothag is only five miles from Portnaguran across the Bay.

### VIVISECTION.

**Mr. J. E. ELLIS** (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the figures of experiments on living animals, contained in Return No. 103 of this Session, are obtained by the Department from the licensees who perform the experiments, and in that case whether any steps are taken to verify their accuracy; who is the judge as to whether severe pain has been induced, which necessitates the killing of the animal, which is a condition of Certificates A, or A + E, or A + F; whether each of the 56 licensed places has been visited during the year, and how many more than once;

whether any of the 121 visits of inspection were surprise visits; and, if so, how many; and whether he has personally satisfied himself that the licences and certificates are all issued only to such places and persons and with such objects, as were contemplated by "The Cruelty to Animals Act, 1876?"

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The Returns are made by the licensees, and no reason has hitherto been found to doubt their accuracy. The licensee must necessarily be the judge of the fact at the time whether the severe pain has been produced which necessitates the killing of the animal. All the licensed places actually in use have been inspected in the course of the year—19 twice, 20 three times, and several four or five times. The visits of the Inspector are as often made without notice as with notice, and 109 visits were so made without notice during the year in question. The operation of the Act is carefully watched in the Home Office, and I am satisfied that the licences and certificates are issued only to such places and persons and with such objects as are contemplated by the Act.

MR. J. E. ELLIS: Am I to understand that the licensee is the judge as to whether severe pain has been induced?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, necessarily so. Nobody else could be the judge.

### FOOD ADULTERATION.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, considering the strong representations that have been recently made to him by two important deputations as to the extensive adulteration frauds which are being perpetrated, he is prepared to nominate a Select Committee to inquire into the general question of food adulteration?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): Some little time ago I received a deputation on the subject of the adulteration of dairy products, and after consulting with my colleagues I intimated that the Government would give its assent to the appointment of a Select Committee. Since then another deputation has urged the widening of the inquiry into the general subject of adulteration, and they pointed out that my two predecessors had agreed last year and the present year to refer the Bill of the hon. Member for Glasgow on the subject to a Select Committee after Second Reading. In view of this, I could not well do otherwise than assent to this wider Committee. It is obvious that it would not be desirable that there should be two such Committees sitting at the same time. I can only hope, therefore, that the hon. Member for Northampton and the hon. Member for Glasgow may come to an agreement as to the terms of Reference, so that one Committee may suffice.

### EDINBURGH MUSEUM.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether there is any, and if so what, reason why the hours of work of the attendants at the Edinburgh Museum should not be from 9 to 5, as at South Kensington, instead of 7 to 9 and 10 to 4, as they are now?

*THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The attendants are employed between 7 and 9 o'clock in cleaning the Museum. I am not aware that this has been hitherto a matter of complaint. I fear that any re-arrangement of duties must involve a reduction in the number of attendants at present employed, or a reduction of pay owing to the lessening of hours.

### THE TITHE DISPUTES IN WALES.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the meeting of the Cardiganshire Joint Standing Committee on the 10th of May last, when it appears that a report was read from the Chief Constable that Robert Lewis, the County Court bailiff, was, while levying tithes, assaulted in the presence of the police by two persons who were well known to the police, but that no proceedings had been taken by the police; that it was proposed by the Chairman of Quarter Sessions and seconded by the Lord Lieutenant that proceedings should be taken for assault, but that this proposal was thrown out by the County Council members of the Joint Committee; and that it was further proposed by the Lord Lieutenant that in all future cases when assaults are committed in the presence of the police the Chief Constable be instructed to take proceedings, but that this proposal was opposed as being out of order by the County Council members, and no decision arrived at; and whether, in view of the serious condition of affairs in Cardiganshire, and the refusal of the Joint Standing Committee to act, he will give direct orders to the Chief Constable, from the Home Office, to take proceedings in such cases, and to take other steps necessary to ensure the carrying out of the law?

MR. ASQUITH: I am informed that there were present at the meeting of the Standing Joint Committee 11 Quarter Session members and 11 County Council members, and the Chairman, who was elected at the meeting for the ensuing year, was a Quarter Session member. The resolution moved by the Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, which was to the effect stated by the hon. Member, was not thrown out by the votes of the County Council members; but it having been pointed out that the men who committed the assaults on the bailiff had been proceeded against already in the County Court and punished, the resolution was withdrawn in favour of that moved by the Lord Lieutenant, to which the hon. Member refers. No vote was taken on this second resolution, as the Chairman ruled that it was necessary that notice should be given, and the Lord Lieutenant thereupon gave notice that he should move the resolution at the next meeting. Having regard to these facts, I do not think there is any reason for my taking any action in the matter.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: Arising out of that answer, may I ask whether it is not the case that action was only taken in the County Court because the police refused to take action; whether it is not the fact that the County Council members of the Standing Joint Committee persistently refused every effort to have the law carried out; and whether the Home Secretary cannot suggest any mode to compel them to carry out the law?

MR. ASQUITH: The latest information furnished to me is that the law is being carried out most effectually.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): Is it not the case that the County Council Members who voted on this question are also members of the Anti-Tithe League, and will the right hon. Gentleman take any steps in future to prevent those persons who are *particeps criminis* from taking part in these proceedings?

MR. ASQUITH: The Standing Joint Committee is an elected body, and I have no power over them whatever.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there are no less than 118 orders of the County Court still unexecuted, and will he take any steps to vindicate the law?

MR. ASQUITH: I should like notice of that question.

## THE ROYAL REVIEW AT ALDERSHOT.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that on the occasion of the late Royal review at Aldershot the total strength of the division was 17,600, and that only 11,600 men were on parade; that the deficiency of 50 per cent. is accounted for by sick 642, guard 187, recruits 815, and other duties 4,600; and whether the 4,600 men employed on other duties, such as servants, cooks, workshops, and clerks, who are not available for duty but who are returned as efficient, could be found by employing the Army Reserve?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This information has been telegraphed for from Aldershot, but has not yet been received.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): Arising out of this question, I should like to ask whether, in the long interval which has elapsed since the Wantage Committee reported on the unemployed soldiers, anything has been done to relieve the hardships of young soldiers under the short service system?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat the question when the hon. and gallant Member for Essex renews his.

## GLASGOW SHIPOWNERS' ASSOCIATIONS AND THE MANNING OF THE MERCANTILE MARINE.

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the Shipowners' Associations of Glasgow were consulted as to the nomination of shipowners to serve upon the Committee on the Manning of Ships in the Mercantile Marine; and whether he is aware that the said Associations are dissatisfied with their representation on the Committee?

MR. BURT: In the selection of shipowners to serve on the Committee referred to by the hon. Member the Board of Trade were influenced by the advice of the Shipowners' Parliamentary Committee, upon which are represented the three Shipowners' Associations of Glasgow. The Board of Trade are not aware that the said Associations are dissatisfied with the constitution of the Committee. Having regard to the extent to which shipowners are represented on that Committee, the Board of Trade are not prepared to make any modification of the arrangements in the direction suggested.

## CRICKET IN PHŒNIX PARK, DUBLIN.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if his attention has been called to the fact that a Major Bailey and John Henry Nunn, on behalf of the Phœnix Park Cricket Club, recently applied at the Dublin Police Court for summonses against other cricketers for trespass on the Phœnix Park, stating that the members of the club had been permitted by the Board of Works to erect a building upon it, and they had a resident caretaker; whether the Magistrate stated he would grant a summons for trespass in a different form to that applied for; are the Government prosecutors, and were they consulted by Major Bailey before summonses were applied for; have exceptional privileges and the right to erect buildings on Crown property been granted to cricket clubs in English parks; and if the general body of Dublin cricketers are to be excluded from certain parts of the Phœnix Park in the interest of a particular club, will he state the special claims of this club to Crown favour?

MR. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not a fact that the two gentlemen named in the question are trustees of the ground and are obliged to act under a penalty to the Irish Board of Works. Has not the club enjoyed the use of the ground for the last 64 years; was not the summonses taken out at the Dublin Police Court for malicious injury and not for trespass; were not the persons summoned rowdies and not *bonâ fide* working men, and did they not give false names and addresses?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): I think the answer I have to give to the question on the Paper will also afford a reply to the hon. Member for North Fermanagh. The trustees of the Phœnix Cricket Club took proceedings against certain persons for injuring the ground which has been set apart for the Phœnix Cricket Club since 1838. The Magistrate stated that there was not wilful injury, but a clear case of trespass, for which a fresh summons could be issued. The Government were not prosecutors, but were aware of the proceedings as the Board of Works, were subpœnaed to produce documents. I am informed that the ground in question was granted in the year 1838 to the Phœnix Club. Four other grounds have at various times been granted respectively to the Constabulary, the Garrison, the Civil Service, and the Working Men's Club, and it is believed that the general body of Dublin cricketers are members of one or other of these clubs. In addition, the Board of Works have recently prepared a ground, adjoining the Phœnix Cricket Club, for general use, on which at least four separate matches can be played at the same time by any of the public not members of clubs. The existence of the separate grounds, therefore, does not interfere with the use of the Park by cricketers not members of the clubs above mentioned. In the English Royal Parks no exceptional privileges are granted to cricket clubs using the Parks. But in Bushey Park certain local clubs have been permitted to erect pavilions on sufferance.

MR. T. M. HEALY: My only desire is if that these proceedings are sanctioned by the Government, the Government should institute them. If a separate piece of ground is being reserved for the general public I am satisfied.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: These gentlemen hold the ground under agreement, and were, therefore, the proper persons to prosecute.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As to the allegation of the hon. Member that the persons prosecuted were rowdies, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that John Henry Nunn, one of the prosecutors, has himself been warned off other cricket grounds for rowdy conduct?

**MR. DANE**: I respectfully appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, if an attack of this nature should be made without notice of the question?

**MR. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member himself made an attack first.

**MR. DANE**: Not on any one named in the question.

### THE TRANSVAAL REPUBLIC.

**MR. CAYZER** (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a report in *The Glasgow Herald* of a meeting of the Nolks' Vereeniging (or People's Union), a political organisation composed entirely of burghers of the Transvaal Republic, held in April last at Kragersdorp, at which speaker after speaker, all burghers of the Transvaal Republic, stated that the Republic was being extensively robbed; that there was scarcely a Government Office in the country in which pilfering did not go on; that the electoral laws were unjust; that the concessions granted to speculators by the Transvaal Government were becoming a burden on the State too heavy to be borne; that the "uitlanders" (a term which includes all British persons) in the Republic have for years complained bitterly of the intolerable burdens the Government have laid upon the mining industry; whether Her Majesty's Government have finally consented to the placing of Swaziland under the Transvaal Republic against the protests of the Queen Regent and the inhabitants of the country; and what is the present position of the Government in Swaziland?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES** (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have seen the paragraph in question, which was forwarded to me by the hon. Member, and I must be allowed to express my regret that vague allegations of this description against the probity of a friendly State should appear in the form of a question on the Order Book of this House. As regards the question of Swaziland, it is still occupying the serious attention of Her Majesty's Government.

### ALLEGED RACING BY ATLANTIC LINERS.

**MR. COHEN** (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the report in *The Standard*, of the 24th instant, of the race across the Atlantic between the steamships *Majestic* and *Paris*, in which it is stated that the *Paris* signalled to the *Majestic* her intention to cross the latter's bows, which was done at no greater distance than 200 or 300 yards, that after this incident a fog suddenly obscured the horizon, and that about 2,400 persons are stated to have been on board the two steamers; and whether the Board of Trade will address the authorities of those great American lines, requesting them to forbid the practice of racing across the Atlantic to the serious risk of the lives of those on board the steamers?

**MR. BURT**: Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to the newspaper reports to which the hon. Member refers, and I have made inquiry into the circumstances of the alleged racing between the steamers *Majestic* and *Paris*. I am assured that the reports in question are entirely incorrect, that the steamers were never within half a mile of each other, that the *Paris* did not signal her intention to cross the bows of the *Majestic*, but that she steadily kept her course. Having regard to the care for safety shown, as I believe, by those answerable for the management of the Atlantic liners, I do not think it necessary for the Board of Trade to further interfere with their discretion or responsibility for the proper navigation of their vessels.

**MR. COHEN**: Has the information just given to the House been confirmed by the captain of the *Majestic*, or is it only the unsupported statement of the captain of the *Paris*?

**MR. BURT**: Yes, Sir, by both. I have a long telegram from the captain of the *Majestic*, which I shall be glad to show to the hon. Member.

### ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

**MR. CROMBIE** (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will accord to the Library of the University of Aberdeen the privilege enjoyed by Public Libraries of obtaining Parliamentary Papers to file for reference; and if he will grant to this Library a set of the six-inch Government Ordnance Maps of Scotland, as there is no complete set of these maps north of Edinburgh?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: In view of the importance of the Aberdeen University I shall be pleased to arrange for adding it to the list of institutions now supplied with Parliamentary Papers free of charge under what are known as "Speaker's Orders" and Treasury authorities. In view, however, of the cost of sets of six-inch Ordnance Maps, I am afraid that I should not be justified in supplying them gratuitously to the University.

### SECOND DIVISION ADMIRALTY CLERKS.

**Captain NORTON** (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Board of Admiralty have yet decided upon the expediency of carrying out the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and the Treasury Minute of the 10th of August, 1889, by establishing staff appointments in various departments of the Admiralty, to which eligible Second Division clerks may be promoted? At the same time, may I ask the hon. Gentleman whether the vacancies which have recently occurred in the Higher Division staff of the Admiralty, and those which will shortly occur owing to retirements, will be filled up; and, if so, whether the qualifications of all eligible clerks of the Second Division will be considered with a view to the selection for promotion to the Higher Division of the required number to fill these vacancies?

**The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY** (Mr. E. Robertson, Dundee) (who replied) said: I would beg to refer my hon. and gallant Friend to the reply given to his question on the 1st of March last, with regard to the clerical establishment of the Admiralty. Both the matters raised in his present questions are included in the general settlement of the staff, which is now engaging the attention of the Admiralty; and when the Committee of the Accountant General's Department has formulated a Report the whole subject will be settled by the Admiralty and the Treasury, and the hon. Member may rest assured that every regard will be shown to the interests of the Second Division clerks.

### PUBLIC RIGHTS ON THE THAMES.

**Mr. LOUGH** (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether it is true that the Charity Commissioners have sanctioned the sale of an eyot in the Thames near Abingdon; and, if so, whether he is willing to take steps that may prevent this further alienation of public rights in the river?

**The PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER** (Mr. F. S. Stevenson, Suffolk, Eye): The Commissioners have given notice of a proposal to sell an eyot in the River Thames belonging to Christ's Hospital, Abingdon, at a price recommended by a surveyor. They are not aware of any public rights affecting the island in question; but before proceeding further they will await an answer to a communication they have addressed to the Thames Conservancy on the subject of the sale.

### PORTNAHAVEN LIGHTHOUSE.

**Sir D. MACFARLANE** (Argyll): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if it is intended to connect the lighthouse at Portnahaven with the post office in that village by telephone; and when the work will be carried out?

**The POSTMASTER GENERAL** (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.) (who replied) said: It is intended to connect the lighthouse at Portnahaven with the post office in the village, and preparations for the erection of the wires are already in progress, but I fear it will take some time to get the necessary wayleaves.

### ARMAGH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM LOAN.

**Mr. BARTON** (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland have received an application from the Governors of the Armagh District Lunatic Asylum for a loan of £30,000, under "The Public Works Loans Act, 1893," on the terms authorised by that Act—namely, repayment within 50 years, with interest at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; whether the Treasury have declined to sanction the loan on these terms, and have insisted on repayment within 40 years, with interest at the rate of $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. per annum; and whether it is believed at the Treasury that the Exchequer would incur any risk if the better terms authorised by the Act of 1893 were allowed in the case of the loan to the Governors of the Armagh Asylum?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: If my hon. Friend will refer to the Act in question he will observe that the fixing of the terms of repayment is left to the Treasury within certain limits. The object of the Act was to enable the Treasury to grant loans for lunatic asylums on the same terms as were previously allowed for sanitary loans, and the words of the section are taken from the corresponding Section (246) of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, under which the terms fixed by the Treasury are:—3½ per cent. with repayment in 35 years; 3¾ per cent. with repayment in 40 years; 4 per cent. with repayment in 50 years. I understand that the Irish Government are about to address the Treasury further upon the question, so that, upon the receipt of their letter, the matter will be considered afresh.

### KILLYBEGS PIER.

MR. DANE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the result of the negotiations between the Irish Congested Districts Board, the Irish Board of Works, and the Treasury respecting the construction of the deep-water pier at Killybegs; and can he say how soon the work of construction will be commenced?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I understand that a member of the Congested Districts Board has within the last few days been deputed to confer with the Board of Works as to the possibility of giving effect to the suggestion of the latter Board for a deep-water quay. If this is agreed upon the only question remaining would be as to whether there will be a sufficient margin upon the railway funds for the proposed contribution by the Board of Works, and the financial position is now being examined.

### LONDON POLICE AND FATAL ACCIDENTS.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the case of a fatal accident at Gifford Street, Islington, on Tuesday the 15th instant, after which a man's dead body was allowed to remain in a back yard for a space of 18 hours; and, considering that the house in question was occupied by 22 persons, and that the attention of the police was immediately called to the case, whether it was their duty to remove the body at once to the mortuary; and whether he will give instructions to the police, so that on any future occasion this shall be done?

MR. ASQUITH: I have made inquiry of the Commissioner of Police, and am informed that the duty of removing the body lay with the coroner's officer, who was twice warned by the police, who also left particulars in writing at the officer's house. I have, therefore, directed communication to be made to the coroner asking for further particulars and an explanation as to his officer's conduct on the occasion referred to.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TUBERCULOSIS.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what was the date of the appointment of the Royal Commission upon Tuberculosis; is that Commission still prosecuting its inquiry and taking evidence, or have they completed that stage of their proceedings; what is the reason of the delay in the production of their Report; and when the Report may be expected?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The Royal Commission on Tuberculosis was appointed on the 21st of July, 1890. I am informed by the Commission that they have completed the taking of evidence, but have been engaged upon a long and elaborate experimental inquiry. Owing to the illness of one of the inquirers, there has been a delay in the completion of one of the Scientific Reports, but this is now being revised in passing through the Press. Immediately it is printed the Commissioners will meet, and their Report may be shortly expected.

### THE IMPRISONMENT OF AMELIA GIFFORD.

MR. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Amelia Gifford, who was recently sentenced by Sir Peter Edlin to 21 days' imprisonment for intimidation, and who was released on Saturday the 19th of May by his special order, was during her imprisonment given a daily task of 2 lbs. of oakum to pick, which is the task given to prisoners sentenced to hard labour; whether prisoners sentenced to simple imprisonment are, according to the Prison Rules, compelled only to keep their cells in order; and whether, if the facts are as stated, he will take steps to prevent a similar infringement of the Rules in future?

MR. ASQUITH: (1) The Governor of Holloway Prison reports that the prisoner Amelia Gifford was not given a daily task of 2 lbs. of oakum to pick, but 1½ lbs., of which she picked a reasonable quantity for a learner, and to which she made no objection. She was not always employed at this work, but occasionally cleaned cells, &c. (2) By the Prison Act, 1865, Schedule 1, Regulation 38, provision is to be made for the employment of all convicted criminal prisoners not sentenced to hard labour, and the instructions to Governors are that such prisoners may be employed at any work of a manufacturing or industrial nature, and that the amount they should be expected to perform should be according to any scale which may be from time to time prescribed for general use. The scale of oakum picking now in force is: for women who are not accustomed to the work, 1½ lbs.; for women accustomed to the work, 2 lbs.

## OUTRAGES IN A DONEGAL CHURCHYARD.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that late on Saturday night, the 19th of May, or early on Sunday morning, the 20th of May, the windows of the Roman Catholic Church of St. Agatha, at Cabra, County Donegal, were smashed, and that some monuments erected in the burial ground attached to the church were injured, and, in particular, a cross which surmounted one of the monuments was broken into fragments, the monument which was most injured being a memorial erected by Mr. John Gullen, a merchant of the town of Donegal, at a cost of upwards of £100, on the grave of his wife; whether he is aware that the Catholic Church of Cabra has repeatedly been the object of sacrilegious outrages, and that expressions blasphemous to the Catholic faith have been affixed to its doors; and whether any steps will be taken to bring the perpetrators of these outrages to justice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed that five panes of glass were broken late on Saturday night, May 19, in the coach-house attached to the Roman Catholic church of St. Agatha, at Cabra, County Donegal; that a monumental stone in the churchyard was injured; that stones were thrown at another monument, but that no injury was done; and that obscene expressions have been written on bills posted on the churchyard walls. These injuries are believed to have been committed by drunken persons, and are not attributed to sectarian bitterness, as all parties in the locality live, I am informed, on amicable terms, and when the church was being built all sects assisted in its erection. The police are using their utmost endeavours to trace the perpetrators of these outrages.

## SAMOA.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is true, as stated by Reuter's Agency in regard to Samoa, that the Agent General of the Australasian Colonies has been informed that the Imperial Government were taking steps for a reconsideration of the Berlin Act, and that Mr. Bayard has intimated to the British Government the desire of the United States Government to retire from the Berlin Act?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I have seen the statements referred to, but no communication has been made to any one by Her Majesty's Government to this effect, nor have we received any intimation either from the United States Government or the United States Ambassador of a desire to retire from the Berlin Act.

## ADMIRALTY BOLT AND NUT CONTRACTS.

MR. LLOYD (Wednesbury): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if the half-inch bolts and nuts are usually specified in their contracts as hand-made; if the half-inch bolts and nuts now being supplied, or recently supplied, are in accordance with the specification on which the orders were given out; whether the bolts and nuts now being supplied are partly hand-made and partly machine-made, and are very inferior to the samples on which the tender or tenders were based; and if permission may be granted to makers and others to inspect the sample bolts and nuts on which the tenders have been obtained?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe), who replied, said: There are three contracts under which half-inch bolts and nuts are supplied—namely, wrought iron, bright steel (machined), black steel (not machined). In none of them are the bolts and nuts required to be hand-made. In the first two contracts the supplies have to be in accordance with pattern, but in the last with specification only, subject to inspection. There is no reason to believe that supplies inferior to those contracted for have been received. When tenders are invited the patterns are accessible to makers.

MR. LLOYD: May I be allowed to inspect the contracts?

*SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: We shall be happy to show them to the hon. Member.

### FRENCH CANALS.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will endeavour to secure from the British Embassy and Consuls in France a special Report on the recent development of canal traffic in that country, dealing especially with the capital expenditure and the annual cost of working the rates or tolls on various descriptions of merchandise, the organisation of the industry and the wages of the *employés*, and the effect of the development upon the agricultural districts?

SIR E. GREY: Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris will be instructed to send home a general Report on the system.

### SIR RICHARD SANKEY.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury on what ground General Sankey has been retained as Chairman of the Irish Board of Works after attaining the age of 65?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: If my hon. Friend will refer to the Return, No. 117, recently presented to Parliament, he will see Sir Richard Sankey's name in a class of cases

> "where an officer has been intrusted with the execution of a particular duty which is approaching completion, and it is found that the transfer of the work to another officer who is necessarily less familiar with it would be attended with inconvenience."

MR. KNOX: Is General Sankey to remain in office till the drainage of the Shannon is completed?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: At the time of the decision the Home Rule Bill was before the House, and it was not thought desirable to create a new vested interest.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is the General to remain in office then till Home Rule has been passed?

[No answer was given.]

### POST OFFICE BELT, &c. CONTRACT.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Post Office triennial contract for belts, pouches, leggings, &c., amounting to £8,000, has been given to the authorities of Her Majesty's Prison at Wandsworth?

MR. A. MORLEY: As stated in my recent answer to the right hon. Member for East Birmingham, leggings have been obtained from the Commissioners of Prisons for some years, and lately the supply of belts and pouches has been obtained from the same source.

MR. BOULNOIS: Were tenders invited?

MR. A. MORLEY: No, Sir.

### IRISH RAILWAY RATES FOR BACON AND PORK.

MR. ROSS (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Great Northern Railway of Ireland carry American bacon, Class 2, at lower rates than Irish dead pigs, Class 1; is he aware of the great loss suffered in consequence by the Irish bacon-curing establishments in the North of Ireland; and will he introduce a clause into the Railway and Canal Amendment Act to prevent this from occurring in future?

MR. BURT: The Board of Trade have communicated with the Railway Company on the subject of the hon. Member's question, and are informed that the rates charged for American and home bacon are precisely the same, while dead pigs have always been charged a higher rate than bacon. The Board cannot undertake to introduce a clause into the Railway and Canal Traffic Amendment Bill, as that Bill has been brought in simply to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee, and such a clause would be beyond its scope.

**Mr. ROSS**: My point is as to the difference in rates for Irish pork which is the raw material and for American bacon. I see no reason for the difference.

**Mr. BURT**: Yes. But the rates for dead pigs have always been higher than those for bacon. If the hon. Member requires further information, I will endeavour to get it.

### WELSH CATHEDRALS.

**Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, when a cathedral is also a parish church, it is intended under the Welsh Disestablishment Bill to transfer its ownership to the proposed Commissioners?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: I am making inquiries on this subject, and until my information is complete I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be good enough to postpone his question.

### POST OFFICE ADMINISTRATION.

**Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND** (Colchester): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he has any information whether Postal Orders Nos. 477,618 and 477,619, for £1 each, and Postal Order No. 985,651, for 4s., have been cashed; if so, where, and by whom; whether he is aware that one of the two first-named and the last Postal Orders were posted upon the 30th of March last to Mrs. Morris, 8, Victoria Road, Brentwood, at the Head Office, Head Street, Colchester, and have not yet arrived at their destination; whether, under these circumstances, the Post Office will undertake either to refund the money or to issue fresh Orders; and whether, when, as in this case, the name of the payee is not inserted, but the number of the Order is known, the Department undertakes to trace or to stop the payment of the missing Order; and why, if so, as the Department was duly advised in this case, that reasonable course for the protection of theft was not followed?

***Mr. A. MORLEY**: I appeal to the hon. and gallant Member and other Members when they desire information on matters merely affecting the detail work of the Department which do not raise questions of principle to apply by letter to me, and so save the time of the House. As to this particular case, I am unable to trace any correspondence with regard to it. If the hon. Member will be good enough to furnish me with the particulars in writing I will cause further inquiry to be made.

### LAND TITLES IN CEYLON.

**Mr. SCHWANN** (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been specially called to the Registration Section of the Administration Report for 1892 of Mr. P. Arunachalam, the Acting Registrar General of Lands in Ceylon, in which the grave and imperative need for a registration of land titles in the Colony is shown; whether the plan set forth by the Acting Registrar General has been reported upon by the Governor of Ceylon, and a draft Ordinance for putting it into force has been submitted to the Secretary of State; whether, in the forthcoming Session of the Ceylon Legislative Council, an Ordinance will be presented to carry out the object contemplated in 1863, when Ordinance No. 8 of that year was passed for the interim registration of deeds; and whether, in view of the social and political evils which centre round the land in Ceylon, and the disputes concerning it, the Secretary of State will take such steps as shall insure this important question early attention, with a view to the necessary legislation being undertaken?

**Mr. S. BUXTON**: The question will be referred to the Governor for consideration and report.

### THE CASE OF MEHDI HASSAN.

**Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY** (Elgin and Nairn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now aware that Mehdi Hassan, a Civil Servant of the Government of India lent to the Hyderabad State, was dismissed from his post as Home Secretary in that State without reason assigned, and in consequence has applied to be re-employed by the Indian Government under the ordinary Civil Service Rules; whether he has also received information that the Government of India have refused Mehdi Hassan's application and have ordered him to send in his resignation by the 31st of this month on pain of dismissal, basing their decision on the nature of certain evidence given at the trial of a certain action, notwithstanding that the Appellate Court has ruled that the evidence in question had been admitted in error by the Lower Court, and notwithstanding that no judgment has been recorded on said evidence by either Court; whether there is any precedent for thus dismissing an Indian Civil Servant on the ground of evidence which has been admitted in error by a Court of Law, and the truth of which has not been tested or established by any judicial finding; and whether he will take steps to secure that no injustice is done to Mehdi Hassan?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I have learnt from the Government of India that Medhi Hassan was dismissed from his employment by His Highness the Nizan, though not without reason assigned. He applied to be re-employed by the Government of India, who refused the application and ordered him to resign subject to any representation which he might make within two months. The Government of India based their decision on the circumstances in which Medhi Hassan's employment at Hyderabad terminated. I have no knowledge of any ruling having been given by an Appellate Court in regard to the Mittra trial; but, so far as Medhi Hassan is concerned, the decision was one entirely within the power of the Government of India, and Medhi Hassan has not exercised his right of appeal to the Secretary of State. If he does, the circumstances will be carefully considered.

## FURIOUS CYCLE RIDING.

MR. RAWSON SHAW (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, owing to the numerous accidents caused to pedestrians by cyclists, he will take practical and speedy steps to remedy this growing danger to the public, by giving strict injunctions to the police to use every endeavour to ascertain the correct name and address of those who cause these accidents, so that they may at any rate be obliged to explain their conduct if called upon?

MR. ASQUITH: The police use every endeavour to prevent furious riding on bicycles and tricycles, and to enforce the carrying of lamps and bells, or whistles. A public notice is issued by the Commissioner and distributed periodically, calling attention to the law on the subject. Proceedings are taken when practicable, but there is a certain difficulty in this, as bicycles and tricycles are not numbered, and their identification is difficult. It is a question whether it may not become necessary to make it compulsory for cycles to bear a registered number conspicuously displayed.

LORD R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been drawn to the case of the pneumatic-tyred cycles, which come silently and stealthily upon one?

MR. ASQUITH: My experience is not that of the noble Lord. I hear them continually ringing bells.

## WAGE EARNERS AND TRADE UNIONS.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, inasmuch as the Treasury cannot give the requisite information, he can order the necessary inquiries to be made with a view to ascertaining the total number of wage earners of the United Kingdom and the proportion who belong to constituted Trade Unions; and whether there is any objection to the results of these inquiries being embodied in a Return and presented to Parliament?

MR. BURT: The number of members of Trade Unions was stated by the Secretary to the Treasury in reply to the hon. Member on Thursday last; but the exact number of wage earners cannot be stated, and it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the number in each trade for the purpose of comparison with the Union or Unions in that trade. So far as the total numbers of the manual labour class are concerned, I may refer the hon. Member to the evidence given by Mr. Giffen before the Labour Commission and to the last Census; but the gross numbers there given include domestic servants, agricultural labourers, and other classes among whom Trade Unionism is little developed, so that the proportion of Trade Union members to the total working class does not show the influence of the Unions in particular trades where Unions exist. The Board of Trade cannot promise an inquiry which would really amount to a new Census, especially as in last Census an attempt was made to distinguish between employers and employed in different industries, or groups of industries.

### JABEZ SPENCER BALFOUR.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Her Majesty's Government have received any confirmation of the telegram from Buenos Ayres, dated the 23rd of May, which states that the public prosecutor of the province of Salta has pronounced in favour of the extradition of Jabez Spencer Balfour; and if such pronouncement has the force of a judicial decision, and amounts to a declaration that his extradition will be granted by the Argentine Government without further delay?

*SIR E. GREY: We have not received any confirmation of this telegram, or of any important decision in the progress of the case.

### THE ALLEGED ILLTREATMENT OF THE MATABELE WOUNDED.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information in reference to the statement which appeared in a Reuter telegram from the Cape, in the *Times* of Monday last, to the effect that the allegations of a certain Mr. Lionel Cohen, published in some English journals, as to the ill-treatment of the Matabele wounded, were entirely false, and that he had withdrawn them?

MR. S. BUXTON: My knowledge of Mr. Lionel Cohen's statement, of the contradiction of them, and of his withdrawal of them is entirely derived from newspaper sources, and I have therefore no official information to convey to the hon. Member.

### PRISON ADMINISTRATION.

MR. GULLY (Carlisle): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a Committee of Inquiry concerning Prisons has been appointed; and, if so, whether he can now state how it will be constituted, and what will be the terms of Reference?

MR. ASQUITH: The appointment of the Committee, which is now complete, is not to be regarded as implying any want of confidence in, still less any censure upon, the existing prison administration. The object is to obtain for the Secretary of State and the public authorities information on various important points, and to make any suggestions to which that information may point. The members of the Prison Committee are Mr. Herbert Gladstone, M.P. (Chairman), Sir Algernon West, K.C.B., Sir John Dorington, M.P., Mr. Haldane, Q.C., M.P., Miss Orme, Dr. J. H. Bridges, late of the Local Government Board, and Mr. de Rutzen, one of the Metropolitan Police Magistrates. The terms of Reference are as follows:—(*a*) The accommodation provided for prisoners, with special reference in the case of local prisons to the working of Section 17, Sub-section 1, and Schedule I., Regulation 26, of the Prison Act, 1865; (*b*) the definition of "young" prisoners—whether and to what extent young or first offenders should be differently treated; (*c*) prison labour and occupation, with special reference to the moral and physical condition of the prisoners; (*d*) visits to and communications with prisoners, with special reference in the case of local prisons to Regulations 54-55; (*e*) prison offences, with special reference in the case of local prisons to Regulations 56-60.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the inquiry extend to convict prisons; is the appointment of the Committee now complete; and, in view of the fact that there was a want of confidence felt in the last Committee of Inquiry, can the right hon. Gentleman see his way to place an Irish Representative on the Committee?

MR. ASQUITH: The inquiry will extend to convict prisons. The Committee as constituted is a very impartial and able body, and I do not think it necessary to add to it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But in view of the fact that considerable dissatisfaction was expressed with the Committee appointed three years ago in consequence of there being no Irish gentleman upon it, and as undoubtedly the Committee will have to inquire into complaints made by Irish prisoners at Portland and elsewhere, will the Home Secretary consider the desirability of strengthening the Committee by the addition of some one or more Irish gentlemen?

**MR. ASQUITH**: I will consider any suggestion the hon. Member may make.

**MR. DILLON** (Mayo, E.): Will the inquiry extend to Ireland?

**MR. ASQUITH**: No, Sir; it is a purely Departmental Committee, appointed by the Home Office to inquire into the administration of English prisons.

### WIMBLEDON RIFLE RANGE.

**MR. MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that John Ingram, a grave digger, whilst engaged at his work in Putney cemetery, was struck in the back by a bullet fired from one of the squads of Volunteers practising at the Wimbledon Rifle Range on Tuesday last, 22nd instant, and died of his wounds in the hospital next day; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter with a view to the prevention of any further fatal accidents of a like sort in this much frequented neighbourhood?

**MR. ASQUITH**: Yes; my attention has been called to this unfortunate accident. I understand that a military inquiry, ordered by the General Officer commanding the Home District, has been made, and I have no doubt that the result of the inquiry will receive the careful consideration of the Military Authorities with a view to the prevention of further accidents.

### THE IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN BOTTLES.

**MR. MACDONA**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the steamship *Cordelia*, owned by Messes. Kilner and Sons, of Portmadoc, has recently arrived in the Thames from Hamburg, and discharged into barges at King's Stairs, Rotherhithe, several tons of bottles made in Germany by Messrs. Lewn and Newman, of Hamburg, but having no indication upon them of their foreign origin; instead of which are the English words, on one side of the bottles, "R. White," and on the other side, "$\frac{1}{4}$d. deposit charged on this bottle," evidently meant to convey the idea that these bottles were of British manufacture; and what steps do the Government propose taking to prevent this breach of the law continuing to the injury of our British workmen?

**MR. BURT**: The Commissioners of Customs state that the marks on the bottles refer to the British-made mineral waters to be subsequently placed in them, and not to the bottles themselves, and that there is not, therefore, any offence against the law.

### THE SMEARING OF MANGO TREES IN BEHAR.

**MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN** (Kent, Faversham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any Report has been received from the local officials in Behar as to the meaning of the recent smearing of mango trees in that Province; whether the planters and other non-officials have been consulted; whether the area within which the phenomenon has occurred is more or less identical with that in which the Cadastral Survey is being made; whether he is aware that Mr. Gibbon, C.I.E., one of the most experienced planters in Behar, has publicly stated that a political movement is indicated; whether the Government has received Petitions, numerously signed by the agricultural population of Behar, protesting against the survey as a measure that is not supported by a single Native authority, and that is dreaded by all classes; and what period is estimated to be necessary for the survey and settlement of the whole of Behar?

***MR. H. H. FOWLER**: The Government of India are inquiring into the matter to which the hon. Member's questions refer; but, at present, no Report either as to the methods of their inquiry or as to its result has reached me. Pending the receipt of such Report I am unable to answer the hon. Member's questions. With regard to the last of those questions, I have received no precise estimate of the time which the Behar Survey, which is at present confined to four districts of North Behar, is likely to occupy; but it is being carried on as rapidly as is consistent with completeness.

### MIXED TRAINS ON IRISH RAILWAYS.

**MR. BODKIN** (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of

Trade if his attention has been called to the unanimous resolution of the Boyle Town Commissioners, praying that the Midland Great Western Railway Company may be allowed to run passenger carriages with certain goods trains to Sligo and back passing through Boyle, and pointing out the extreme hardship inflicted on the travelling public on this line by the existing restriction; and whether he will kindly give the matter his immediate and favourable consideration?

**Mr. BURT**: The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the resolution referred to. Since the passing of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, it is quite inadmissible to permit Railway Companies to attach passenger carriages to goods trains. That Act was passed in the interest of public safety, and the Board cannot take the responsibility of relaxing its requirements in such a direction. The Railway Company should be pressed by the Memorialists to give proper facilities to the travelling public.

### RECRUITING IN BRITISH COLONIES.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE**: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Secretary of State has recommended the Secretary of State for the Colonies (in accordance with Sir F. Plunkett's Despatch of the 12th of May to M. van Eetrelde) to give facilities for recruitment under suitable conditions in the British Colonies on the West Coast of Africa; will he explain why His Majesty King Leopold II. cannot be expected to raise the recruits in his own Free State; and whether provision will be made that recruits in no case shall be either hired slaves or other than entirely free men?

***Sir E. GREY**: I can give no information as to whether it is easy or not to obtain recruits in the Congo State. No special instructions have yet been considered as to facilities for recruiting in the British West African Colonies, but I must point out to the hon. Member that there are no slaves in British Colonies.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE**: Is it not without precedent for a foreign Power to recruit in a British colony?

**Sir G. BADEN-POWELL**: If any British subjects were enlisted, would not the stipulations of the Foreign Enlistments Act become operative?

***Sir E. GREY**: I cannot answer these questions without notice. I can only repeat that no special instructions have yet been considered.

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN SCOTLAND.

**Mr. CALDWELL** (Lanark, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Scotch Education Department have any information as to the number of schools in Scotland other than State-aided, and as to the number of children on the roll or in average attendance at these schools; what is the number of children in Scotland between the ages of 5 and 14 who are receiving instruction otherwise than in State-aided schools; and whether the Department will, in their next Report, give statistical information regarding schools in Scotland, other than those which are on the Annual Grant List, setting forth, under separate headings, schools under any scheme authorised by the Department; schools under any other foundation or endowment; schools by companies, associations, or promoters; and all other non-State-aided schools; giving, under each heading, the number of children of all ages on the roll receiving secondary education and elementary education, and, where possible, the average attendance?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: The Department issued in 1888 a Return which, amongst other particulars, gave such statistics as could be obtained with regard to schools other than public or State-aided schools. The districts in which such schools exist are a small proportion of the whole; and owing to the refusal of information in many cases the statistics in that respect were not reliable, had they been required for any administrative purpose. I have no reason to think that School Boards do not take account of such schools in their own district; but I cannot undertake to furnish the statistics referred to in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's question.

### LUNATICS IN BELFAST WORKHOUSE.

**Mr. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the reports of the proceedings at the meeting of the Belfast Board of Guardians on the 22nd instant, from which it appears that a letter was received from the City Coroner complaining, among other things, that whereas until the 3rd April last he had received information regarding deaths in the lunatic department which enabled him to decide whether he should hold an inquest or not, this information is now refused him; that the coroner submitted a list of queries concerning the deceased to be answered by the doctor, but the doctor declined to answer these queries; and, if so, by whose directions; and that, notwithstanding the instructions of the Local Government Board, one of the Guardians stated at the meeting that he would incur the risk and responsibility of refusing to report any longer to the coroner deaths that might occur in that workhouse; and whether, considering that there were about 50 deaths out of 490 inmates in this department since the 15th of December, 1893, he will cause the best information to be forwarded to the coroner when he applies for it to the officials of the workhouse?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I have seen a report of the proceedings of the Guardians at their meeting held on the 22nd instant, from which it appears that the statements contained in the question of my hon. Friend are accurately set forth, and I have directed that an Inspector of the Local Government Board should proceed to Belfast to inquire how the matter stands.

## FEES ON APPOINTMENT OF MAGISTRATES.

**Mr. BRUNNER** (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he intends to make applicable to Chairmen of the District Councils, who are *ex officio* Justices of the Peace during their term of office, which extends to one year only, the fee of £2 which he proposes should be payable by Justices of the Peace who are appointed for life?

**Mr. ASQUITH**: The case put by my hon. Friend appears to be of a special kind, and ought, I think, to be dealt with exceptionally. It would, undoubtedly, be a hardship if these gentlemen were required to pay the same fee as ordinary Magistrates.

## INSANITARY STEAMERS ON THE SCOTCH COAST.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will make inquiries regarding the alleged insanitary state of steamers plying on the north-west coast of Scotland; and whether he will require the owners of these steamers to put and maintain them in a proper sanitary condition?

**Mr. BURT**: I can only repeat the reply given by the late President of the Board of Trade to a similar question put to him by my hon. Friend on the 7th instant. No complaints have been made to the Board or to its local officers with regard to the sanitary arrangements on board the steamers referred to, but if any definite complaints are made they shall be carefully inquired into.

**Mr. WEIR**: Will an Inspector be directed to examine these steamers from time to time?

**Mr. BURT**: No complaints have been received, and I suppose that Government Departments usually have quite enough to do without going in search of work.

## MAGISTRACY, CO. TIPPERARY.

**Mr. MANDEVILLE** (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will any Magistrates be appointed to replace the Magistrates who have died recently in the Petty Sessions districts of Tipperary, Bansha, Cappawhite, Cahir, and Clogheen, or to replace the Magistrates who, on account of old age or other causes, never attend Petty Sessions in those districts?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: Nine recent appointments to the Commission of the Peace have been made in the County Tipperary, and of the Magistrates so appointed one is available in Cappawhite and another in Cahir. The present Lord Chancellor has appointed 24 Magistrates for this county, and he is now considering the appointments of others.

## ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT REPORT.

**Mr. A. C. MORTON** (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Medical Department Report for 1892 has only been issued this month; and, if so, whether he will take steps to secure that these Reports shall, in the interest of the health and comfort of our soldiers and sailors, be issued at a much earlier date ?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : The amount of statistical work that is necessary for the compilation of this Report, and the fact that many of the Returns have to come from India and other stations abroad, account, in great measure, for the delay in publishing it, but every effort is made to secure such rapidity as is consistent with accuracy. The principal medical officer in India has been requested to expedite the despatch of the Returns from that country. Practically, the delay that takes place in publishing this Report in no way affects the health and comfort of our soldiers ; as any point that may arise is dealt with at once, without waiting for the publication of the Report.

### RAILWAY MEN AS BOARD OF TRADE INSPECTORS.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the inquiries by Board of Trade Inspectors into railway accidents have, with one or two exceptions, been confined to train accidents ; whether, on the average of the past 10 years, the fatalities among railway men in shunting, coupling and uncoupling vehicles, marshalling trains, plate laying, fog-signalling, and other duties have been from 40 to 50 times as numerous as the fatalities to railway servants in the train accidents investigated by Inspectors ; and whether, having regard to the importance of accurately determining the causes of these fatalities in accidents other than train accidents, the Board of Trade is now prepared to appoint two or more practical railway men as sub-Inspectors to investigate such accidents, and for other duties ?

Mr. BURT : Without fully admitting the accuracy of the figures quoted by my hon. Friend, I am in a position to say that the Board of Trade recognise the importance of the subject, and that the question of the appointment of one or more practical railway men as sub-Inspectors is under the immediate consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. CHANNING : Has any decision been arrived at ?

Mr. BURT : A decision has practically been arrived at.

Mr. CHANNING : In favour of the proposal ?

Mr. BURT : In favour.

### THE SALTCOATS CROFTER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. WEIR : I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can now state when the Report of Sir Charles Tupper on the Saltcoats (Canada) Crofters Settlement will be presented to Parliament ?

Sir G. TREVELYAN ; The Report is now in the printers' hands, and it will be presented very shortly.

### BRITISH SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN EAST AFRICA.

Sir G. BADEN-POWELL : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what is the northerly limit to the British sphere of influence in East Africa which is claimed by Her Majesty's Government ; and whether the assent of France has been given to the delimitation of the north-westerly portions of that sphere as set out in the Treaty of the 12th of May, 1894, concluded with His Majesty King Leopold II., Sovereign of the independent State of the Congo ?

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whence the title of this country is derived to the territories which have been leased to the King of the Belgians ; whether the European Powers having interests in Africa are parties to the arrangement, and recognise the title of this country to these territories ; whether Her Majesty's Government have considered the bearing on the arrangement of the rights of pre-emption possessed by France over the territories of the Congo State ; whether the British sphere of influence extends to any territory north, east, or west of the 10th parallel north, which forms the northern frontier of the territory leased to the King of the Belgians ; and if there be any territory within the sphere of British influence, whether he will state what is its northern, eastern, and western frontier ?

*Sir E. GREY : The territories leased to the King of the Belgians are within the British sphere of influence as defined in the Anglo-German Agreement of 1890, to which no exception has been taken by any Power having interests in Africa. The effect of the Agreement with the King of the Belgians is that the British sphere, already recognised by Germany and Italy, is also recognised by the Congo State, another adjoining Power, the rights which Turkey and Egypt may have being specially reserved. Any rights of pre-emption which France may possess over the Congo State cannot be affected by the Agreement, which is dependent upon the continuance of the Congo State under the Sovereignty of the King of the Belgians or His Majesty's successors. With regard to the limits of the British sphere of influence, I can only refer the hon. Member to the terms of the Agreements with Germany and Italy.

MR. LABOUCHERE: May I ask whether I am right in the conclusion I draw from these Agreements, that the British sphere of influence does not extend north on the west side of the Nile beyond parallel 12 degrees, and on the east side of the river beyond parallel 11 degrees, there or thereabouts?

*SIR E. GREY: So far as our geographical knowledge extends, we believe the limit is accurately indicated by the line drawn in the map which has been laid on the Table of the House and in the terms of the Agreements to which I have already referred. As to the exact geographical extent of these Agreements, I must ask my hon. Friend to compare these Agreements carefully with the map which we have placed in the Tea Room, and which together will give him the most accurate information that it is in my power, or in that of anyone else, to afford him on the subject.

MR. LABOUCHERE: We are speaking of territories larger in extent than Great Britain. Do I derive from my comparison of these two maps a just conclusion that we do not claim any sphere of influence north, on the left bank of the Nile, beyond the 12th parallel, and on the right bank only up to the 11th parallel? I do not tie my hon. Friend down to 50 or 60 miles, but I ask whether this general conclusion is a correct one?

*SIR E. GREY: It is quite true that the territories in question are larger than Great Britain, but they have not been so carefully explored. I have given the hon. Member a reference to the Agreement and to the very best maps in our possession, and he must draw his own conclusion from that information.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I wish to know whether I am really to understand that Khartoum is not in the British sphere of influence?

*SIR E. GREY: No point as far north as Khartoum has been named in the Agreements to which I have referred as being within the British sphere of influence.

## DERELICT LAND IN ESSEX.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will allow the map attached to the Report on Essex Agriculture, showing the extent of land derelict and out of tillage in that county, to be exhibited in the Tea Room of the House for the information of hon. Members?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I think that as the map has been circulated among hon. Members, and a copy is in the Library, it is not necessary to place it in the Tea Room.

## FUR SEAL FISHERIES.

SIR G. BADEN-POWELL: I beg to ask the Attorney General whether the recommendations as to the Regulations for the fur seal fishery made by the Tribunal of Arbitration which sat in Paris are binding on British subjects before they have been embodied in an Act of Parliament?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar): They would not be binding on British subjects so as to make them liable for penalties before being embodied in an Act of Parliament, but they have been so embodied, and I understand the embodiment took place before any infringement could be made.

## TRADE WITH THE COLONIES.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if the Government has determined to give favourable effect to the representations which have been made by the Hon. Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner for Canada, the Hon. Robert Reid, Minister of Defence of Victoria, specially delegated by his

Government, and the Hon. Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, Chief Secretary of Queensland, supported by the Agents General of other leading Colonies, for the amendment of Section 3 of "The Australasian Customs Act, 1873," which in its present form is limited to the Australasian Colonies alone, and thus prevents Dependencies of the Empire distant from each other from concluding mutually advantageous and preferential trading arrangements with each other; and if the Imperial Government intends to be represented at the forthcoming Empire Trade Conference, convened by the Dominion of Canada; and, if so, by whom?

**Mr. S. BUXTON** (who replied) said: Her Majesty's Government are considering the matter in conjunction with the Law Officers of the Crown. Her Majesty's Government intend to be represented at the Conference of Colonial Representatives which will meet at Ottawa next month to discuss the question of cable and steam communication between Canada and Australasia, and the subject referred to by the hon. Member. I am happy to say that Lord Jersey has consented to attend the Conference on our behalf.

## THE COURSE OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

**Mr. J. E. ELLIS**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the magnitude of the financial proposals of the Government, to the time which may reasonably be occupied by the Finance Bill in its further stages, and to the desirability that the decision of the House shall be taken upon its provisions without unnecessary delay, the Government will take steps to enable it to be taken at once and continuously?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government intend to ask the House to place further time at its disposal. I will place the Notice of Motion upon that subject upon the Paper to-morrow.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** (Paddington, S.): May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, carried by a majority of 87, a pledge as to which was given, will be excluded?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I trust it will not be excluded, but I will defer any statement until the proper time.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR** (Manchester, E.): I suppose the discussion will be put down for Thursday?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: Yes. There will be ample time given to consider it, as I will put down the Notice to-morrow. I may add that, as I understand some gentlemen wish to make some remarks on the Report of the Vote on Account, I shall put down a Notice to suspend the Twelve o'Clock Rule to-morrow, and I will undertake to bring the Report on at 11 o'clock, so as to give ample time. I understand that that is the desire of hon. Gentlemen.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: The right hon. Gentleman is quite right. I happen to know that various Members felt themselves cut out rather on Friday night, and they desire to raise various points upon the Report. I am sorry that one of them, my right hon. Friend the Member for Sleaford, is obliged to be away to-morrow, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to alter his arrangement. [*Cries of* "No, no!"]

## CANADIAN CATTLE.

**Mr. CHAPLIN**: With reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, I am sorry to say that I cannot be here to-morrow. I will ask the President of the Board of Agriculture a question on a subject on which I should have had something to say if I had been able to be here—the importation of Canadian cattle. I beg to ask him whether, with regard to the special examination which he has instituted into the health of Canadian cattle, any suspicious cases have been reported to the Department already?

**The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE** (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): On examination, the lungs of an animal landed at Liverpool by the steamship *Toronto*, from Montreal, on the 20th inst., and slaughtered on the 23rd inst., were found to present appearances distinctly suggestive of pleuro-pneumonia. The diseased portion is now being made the subject of careful examination by the veterinary officers of my Department, who will report to me the result at the earliest possible moment. So soon as the lungs in question were received, I invited a number of gentlemen, whose evidence in such matters would be likely to be of value, to inspect the lungs while these were still fresh, and to take careful notes of the appearances presented. I hope that by this means I have secured ample material upon which to base any further investigation which might be decided on.

**Mr. JEFFREYS** (Hants, Basingstoke): After this discovery, is it the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to relax the restrictions now enforced?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: I have just said that no decision has been taken on the matter.

## THE IRISH CHURCH FUND.

**Mr. KNOX**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the loans made by the National Debt Commissioners to the Irish Church Fund are repayable at the pleasure of the Commissioners entrusted with the control of the latter fund; or, if otherwise, then at what times they are repayable; in how many cases English Public Bodies, which had borrowed money from the National Debt Commissioners or the Public Works Loan Commissioners, have within the last five years borrowed money at lower interest in order to repay the loans; and whether he will insert a clause in the Finance Bill, or in the Local Loans Bill, enabling the Irish Land Commission to borrow at 3 per cent. on the security of the Church Fund a sufficient sum to pay off their debt to the National Debt Commissioners? I also beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the interest on the part of the Irish Church Fund, held for the purposes of the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Acts, is shortly to be reduced to $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.; and, if so, why the interest payable to Irish Commissioners is to be reduced, while that payable to the National Debt Commissioners is not to be reduced?

***Sir W. HARCOURT**: In reply to both these questions, I think it would be most convenient if the hon. Member would discuss the matter personally with the officials of the Treasury. If the hon. Member will do this, he will be given full information.

## ADJOURNMENT.

## MANUFACTURE OF EXPLOSIVES (WALTHAM ABBEY).

Colonel LOCKWOOD Member for West Essex, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—

> "The imminent danger to life and property to which the workmen employed in the manufacture of explosives in the Government Manufactory at Waltham Abbey and the inhabitants of the district generally are daily exposed, and to the ineffectual precautions against accident,"

but the pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. Speaker called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen:—

**Colonel LOCKWOOD** said, he did not think the House would require him to make any excuse for having employed this particular form in order to bring to their notice the dangerous position of his constituents. When they remembered that nearly 900 men were employed in the Government factory, and that Waltham Abbey had about 6,000 inhabitants, and was surrounded on the south and east by the works which constituted the largest factory of explosives in the United Kingdom, it would be seen that these men—the workmen—were living with their lives, not in the hollow of their hands, but on the tips of their fingers. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War might think that the course he (Colonel Lockwood) was taking was not only inconvenient, but unfair, but when the right hon. Gentleman had heard his reasons he would most probably acquit him. There were only, so far as he could see, three courses open to him. In the first place, he might put a question. Well, he had put many questions, but without attaining any satisfactory result. In the second place, he might have waited for the Army Estimates. His experience in the House was not extensive, but he had been there long enough to know that the opportunity he sought, if he waited for the Estimates, would be afforded him some time in the month of July or August, on some sultry evening when there was a thin attendance and the House was weary.

His constituents were not anxious to wait for such a period. The third course he might have taken would have been to move an Amendment on the Report of Supply, but he had endeavoured to bring a question forward on this stage of Supply on a previous occasion, and had failed to obtain an answer. Under the circumstances he felt that he was entitled to bring the present question forward on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House, having regard to its vital importance to his constituents. The Government had had the Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider the condition of the Waltham Works in their hands six weeks. The Committee began its inquiry on the 26th of January, and concluded on the 16th of February, and from that time until now he and his constituents were ignorant as to what measures were to be adopted for their safety and the safety of the men employed in the factory. The Report was not a large one. The conclusions of the Committee were contained in eight pages of large print; therefore, he thought that the time the Government had had to act upon it had been ample. It might be said that the new buildings for the manufacture of cordite were being pushed on day and night, but it must not be forgotten that the lives of at least 900 men were at stake. Before he proceeded further he would state that he did not desire to cast a shadow of blame upon the Superintendent of the factory, Colonel M'Clintock—an officer of great capacity and wide experience. That officer had earned the sympathy of all the men in the factory by his kindness to the wives and families of the men killed and injured in the explosions. It was the system he wished to blame. From 1871 to December 13th, 1893, the Waltham Works had been very fortunate. There had been few explosions, only three persons having been killed, but if the Report of the Committee was to be believed, this was owing more to good luck than to good management. On the 13th of December, 1893, an explosion of E. X. E. powder which was being pressed into prisms took place. Nine men were killed, and one was injured. One was killed on the spot, and the other eight subsequently died of burns. One man, and one man only, escaped. Then followed the explosion of March 1, 1894, of guncotton in the dipping-house, when four men were injured. That was followed by the explosion on the 30th of March in the settling pond; and the last explosion took place on the 7th of May, when four men were killed and 20 hurt. There were four explosions in six months, in which 13 persons were killed, and 25 wounded. He ventured to think that that was a "definite matter of urgent public importance." He did not think that his constituents were cowards, but after such an experience as this, surely he had a right to ask that immediate steps should be taken, and to ask what steps they would be. After the Cam House explosion the hon. Member for Preston asked if the Government worked under the Explosives Act of 1875. An evasive answer was given, but the hon. Member, with the persistence which was characteristic of him, insisted on an answer, and he then found that under Section 97 the Government exempted themselves from the operation of the Explosives Act. The Rules laid down for the regulation of private factories were very stringent, but the Government, who were the largest employers of labour of this kind, were exempt. Well, the next step the Government took was, he confessed, the right one after the explosion of the 13th December. They appointed a Committee of Inquiry. He did not quite know what sort of a Committee it was—whether a Government Departmental Committee or a public Committee. The Committee consisted of four persons. There was Colonel Majendie, who was, perhaps, very properly placed on the Committee, being Inspector of Explosives and a gentleman with an intimate knowledge of the subject. There was Sir F. Abel, who could hardly be looked upon as an independent member of the Committee, having regard to his connection with the War Office. There was Colonel Lloyd, Assistant Adjutant General at Woolwich; and there was Lord Sandhurst, the Chairman. He did not say a word against Lord Sandhurst. He believed him to be a capable and painstaking man, but to appoint the Under Secretary for War Chairman of a Committee practically inquiring into the conduct of the War Office was a most extraordinary course for the Government to take. The Committee in their Report said—

> "When the Explosives Act, 1875, was passed, Section 97, which exempts Government factories from its operation, was, it is understood, adopted in a very large degree, because it was considered that the Government Department principally concerned, namely, the War Office, could be depended on to secure throughout its factories, without having recourse to the machinery provided for private factories, the same beneficial results which the application of the Act and the introduction of an independent system of inspection were designed to effect in the civil establishments.
>
> With this view the Committee are disposed to concur.
>
> But if it should be found impracticable to secure, through the independent action of the War Department, results corresponding to those which the action of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives has accomplished in the private factories, then in the judgment of the Committee it would certainly be in the highest degree expedient that the question of subjecting the Government establishments where explosives are manufactured, manipulated, or stored to the inspection of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Explosives should be taken into serious consideration."

That showed that the Government knew perfectly well when this Committee was appointed that the War Office was practically on its trial, and yet in the face of that they appointed the Under Secretary for War to the Chairmanship. The War Office had chosen to exempt itself deliberately by Section 97 from the Explosives Act of 1875. An explosion took place, and it was only right that the War Office should take the consequences of it, and that a Committee should examine into the line of conduct pursued by them, and it was not right for them to appoint an official Chairman to preside over that Committee. But, notwithstanding the appointment of an official Chairman, the evidence was so plain that the Committee were obliged to make a Return in the form contained in the Blue Book. There were too many Blue Books issued for hon. Members to read them all, but any person who had taken the trouble to read the one to which he referred must have observed a condemnation of the Government system in every page and every line of it. There was shown to have been at Waltham Abbey a lack of system, of discipline, and of ordinary precautions such as would be taken in every private factory in the United Kingdom. A man who had worked 15 years at this Government establishment and was now the Superintendent of a private factory in the West of England had told him (Colonel Lockwood) that not a day passed at the Government factory without the Rules—most important Rules—being broken. The number of men in or about the Cam House at the time of the explosion was largely in excess of the number allowed in private factories. There were 11 men at work—eight at four machines, the foreman, and two boatmen. Nine of these had succumbed to their injuries, and only one man had escaped uninjured. The Committee, in their Report, stated that the search for matches was most inefficient. The Rule as to searching for matches was the most important one in force in private factories. In every gunpowder factory in the world those who went in were searched for matches. The Committee found that at the Royal Factory the precautions were not applied in a strict or efficient manner. Although so many people were passing into the works, only one attempt was made to search daily—at 1.10 in the afternoon—and that in a most perfunctory manner. If the foreman's evidence was to be believed—

> "They did not trouble about searching men on night duty."

The Superintendent could not refer the Committee to any written rule or regulation requiring daily searching, and the Committee, therefore, found that the whole system of search designed to secure the exclusion of lucifer matches was very weak and ineffective. They also said that there were very grave defects in the system of discipline and precautions prevailing at Waltham Abbey, and that there was urgent necessity for the adoption of disciplinary measures for their more vigorous enforcement. There he thought he had a confirmation of what he had said, that he was within his right in bringing forward the present Motion. He considered that there was urgent necessity for measures to be taken. More than a month had passed, and they knew of nothing the Government had done. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had any right to complain—if he did complain—of the method adopted of bringing the question before the House. The evidence given before the Committee went to show that the precautions adopted at Waltham fell short of those found necessary in private factories. Indeed, the evidence had clearly established that great laxity had prevailed in this direction. If he could help it, he was not going to allow this great laxity to continue. To go on to the second accident, it was true that was caused by the rashness of one of the unfortunate men, who still lay shattered and mangled in bed. He was an unfortunate friend of his (Colonel Lockwood's), and would be, he was sure, unwilling to throw the blame for the accident on anyone else. But this accident really occurred through want of discipline. No one had a right in the factory to be experimentalising on his own account. Then followed the explosion in the settling pond—the settling pond being a small pond at the bottom of the nitro-glycerine magazine where the waste stuff was drawn off. When this waste was at a certain heat it was exploded purposely. The authorities, it was true, were anxious to spare the nerves of Mr. Findlay, the foreman who had been injured in the dipping-house explosion. He did not think the Financial Secretary to the War Office was right when he said this explosion only frightened two or three old women.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley): No, no. I did not make any such statement as that.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said, if that were so, he was sorry he had misquoted the hon. Member. He thought the hon. Member had said something to the effect that the explosion only made a loud noise and frightened a few people.

MR. WOODALL said, his statement had been that, though the explosion made a loud noise so as to cause alarm, it was followed by no accident to individuals or property. It did cause a large amount of surprise to those who were responsible for firing the material.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD said, he gladly accepted that correction. But the explosion certainly caused alarm in the minds of the inhabitants of Waltham Abbey already startled by two previous explosions. After this came the most disastrous explosion that had occurred—namely, that on the 7th of May at 10 minutes past 4 in the afternoon of two tons of nitro-glycerine. Four men were killed and 20 wounded—the wounds being slight and caused by falling glass in neighbouring buildings. The buildings in which the cordite was manufactured were situated south or south-east of the town. They were only about 500 yards as the crow flies from the main street of old Waltham Abbey. There were three houses—first, the nitrating house, then the purifying houses from which the liquor ran down in the form of nitro-glycerine into the magazines. The two houses in which the nitro-glycerine was stored exploded one after the other, and of course the result was most disastrous. The House could imagine what would be the effect of the explosion of two tons of nitro-glycerine in close neighbourhood to a town of 6,000 inhabitants. On the side of the road opposite to the factory there were a farm and buildings placed there before the Government works were established. These buildings were shattered, and it was a fact that the windows of conveyances passing along the road were blown in, and a great deal of alarm and confusion caused. As a fact, if the wind had not been in a contrary direction, half of the town would have been in ruins to-day. The manufacture of cordite was one of the most dangerous processes that could be carried on. To begin with, we know little or nothing of the cordite powers and conditions under which it would explode; but the Government did know, or ought to know, that the manufacture of nitro-glycerine was a work of extreme danger — pronounced by able chemists to be so—so dangerous that though the Government had tried to get private firms to tender for cordite manufacture, they could not get them. He wondered what the Government of this country would do in case of war if their works were blown up. He had much doubt if they had a right to go on with the manufacture of this particular powder. Its manufacture could never be safe. Cordite was chosen in days when smokeless powders were young. Now we had plenty of non-nitrate to choose from. Were the Government going to continue the manufacture of this particular powder to the imminent danger of workmen and the neighbourhood? Surely, if the manufacture of cordite was to be continued, the works should be more isolated and the store of finished nitro-glycerine and cordite be reduced to a minimum. The Member for South Manchester had asked if there was a chemist in charge when the explosion occurred. "Yes," said the Financial Secretary; but, as a matter of fact, who did the House think was the chemist in charge of this most delicate and dangerous manufacture?—a poor young man of 22 years of age. Could foolish economy and foolhardiness go further? The Financial Secretary stated that—

> "When appeals to the benevolence of the neighbourhood were made on a late occasion, it was in apparent ignorance of the fact that any allowance from public funds would be given."

A statement of that kind had a most disastrous effect on public sympathy. What was the truth of the matter? The allowance was in most cases a miserable one, and very frequently the relatives of sufferers got nothing at all. He wrote to the public Press setting out the whole terms of the Warrant. The result of the distribution of money in regard to the Cam House explosion was that Mrs. Massey got £10 pension and £14 for the child; Mrs. Rudkin obtained no pension, but a gratuity of £30; Mrs. Hare got £24 7s., while Mrs. Bailey and Mrs. Laman got nothing. The relatives of Watts, Rudd, Clayden, and Jennings likewise got nothing. In reference to the explosion in May, 1894, Mrs. Ingram, for herself and four children, got a gratuity of £134, with no pension. In Bennies' case the father and mother would get nothing. Mrs. Frost would obtain 5s. a week, Mrs. Suckley would get £18 pension a year or 7s. a week, and in this latter case the husband was a foreman earning 39s. a week. He thought that the House ought to know what provisions were adopted by the Government for the safety of the men engaged in powder mills. If the manufacture of cordite was continued the buildings ought to be more isolated; there should be a leading and experienced chemist in charge; and he urged that where an accident did happen the scale of pensions and gratuities should be revised in order that widows and relatives should not be starved, and so that inhabitants of places which might be damaged should be suitably recompensed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Colonel Lockwood.*)

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down had spoken mainly from the point of view of his own constituents. There was, however, another view of the question. The condition of things at Waltham was nothing short of a national disgrace, from the responsibility of which the House of Commons itself was by no means free. It was by the grace of the House that these Government factories were exempt from the precautions which were taken in the case of all private works; and if similar explosions occurred at a private factory large compensation would have to be paid, not only for the lives lost but for the property injured. So far from fewer precautions being taken at these Government factories, he contended that they should, if anything, set an example to the private factories. What was the good of giving Government workmen an eight hours day if precautions were not taken to safeguard their lives? He would not, for two reasons, deal with the cordite factory—first, because it was known that he was prejudiced against cordite, and, next, because they had not yet received a definite Report. Limiting his observations, therefore, to the gunpowder factory, and taking the least dangerous portion of it —namely, the "camp houses," where the explosion occurred, he would contrast the precautions taken there with those in force at private factories. In the case of the latter, the rule was that even when 500lb. of gunpowder was stored it must not be stored within 100 yards of any private building, within 900 yards of any Government factory, or within two miles of any residence of the Queen. In no powder or other explosive factory in England were they allowed to have, under any circumstances, more than six persons present where machinery was at work, but at Waltham there were 11 men, of whom nine were killed. In other works there must not be more than one machine in one room, but here there were four machines in one room, and these not properly guarded. Again, Colonel Ford, the Home Office Inspector of Explosives, insisted in the case of private factories that all gunpowder should be removed from a room where repairs were taking place, that all steel tools should be covered with leather, that no meals should be taken in the work-rooms, and that the whole of the buildings should be lined with wood and varnish, all which matters were ignored at Waltham; and it appeared from the evidence that the Regulations for searching workmen to prevent the introduction of matches, &c., were carried out in a most superficial way. They were told that there was a triple line of defence in this respect—that the men were searched at the gates, that there was another search in the place in which they changed their clothes, and a further search in the shop or shed in which they carried on their work. With regard to the search at the gate, he found that it was left entirely to the discretion of the constable on duty as to whether a man should or should not be searched, and that not more than one man in ten was ever searched at all. When the search did take place it was useless, because, according to the evidence which was given, it simply consisted of touching the outside of the men's pockets. As to the arrangements in the place where the men changed their clothes, it was the case that about 200 of the men entered the rooms together, and that there was only one official to examine them. During meal times the men had access to the rooms, and there was nothing whatever to prevent them from putting on any garment under their smocks and so carrying it with its contents into the workshops. The search in the workshops was the search on which the Superintendents were supposed to rely. Colonel McClintock in his evidence, speaking with all the authority of the Superintendent of this factory, said that these men were searched daily and rigorously in the workshop itself. His attention was called to the fact that there was no rule on the subject, and he had to admit it, but he said he thought that was the practice. The men were not searched either in passing through the gate or in the dressing room, but the Superintendent thought they were searched in the workshops. What were the facts? A foreman who had been working in this particular house—hon. Members would recollect that this explosion took place at night—said, it being his duty to search the men—"We did not trouble much about searching at night." It would seem to anyone that the danger at that time was greater even than in the daytime. And in the daytime of what did this "daily and rigorous search," of which the Superintendent spoke, consist of? The evidence was that

> "Once a fortnight, when everybody knew it would take place, were these men searched at all."

Was not that a piece of inconceivable idiotcy which could not take place anywhere else than in a Government factory? Then at night what was the practice? A man was sent round, the Committee were told, to pay surprise visits during the night; but the evidence showed that he only went round once—at 9 o'clock; that he merely looked in at the door and asked if all was right. "We"—that is, the men—"say 'Yes,' and then he goes off to bed." That was not the way to inspect factories of this kind. Other men who had been employed in the factory for two years gave evidence. One of them said—

> "I have not been searched anywhere while I have been in the place half-a-dozen times;"

and the other said he had not been searched at all—

> "The foreman merely says, 'I suppose your clothes are all right.' They would sometimes run two or three months without even asking us."

There were no tell-tale clocks to show when the inspection visits were made, and even if the visits were made no Reports had to be presented. Colonel Ford was asked whether, if there was no written Report, he would consider the system faulty. He said—

> "Yes, and if an accident happened I should call prominent attention to it."

So necessary was a stringent search considered by the Home Office in the case of other factories that Inspectors went round the country to pay surprise visits, but in the case of the War Office factories no such inspection was made at all. A nominal search only was made by the War Office officials. People came into these factories from the barges bringing coal from contractors. They were allowed to pass in and wander over the place wherever they liked without any pretence of search at all. These men brought in matches. One of the foremen said—

> "I have myself repeatedly found matches about the grounds and carried in on men's boots; they were live matches."

Matches were found lying about in this Government factory where cordite and gunpowder were manufactured. But the Superintendent had no control over those men coming in; he could not punish them. All he could do was this—

> "The colonel would write to the contractors and say that that man was not to be allowed to go there again."

That showed pretty well how these factories were managed. Then, on the general question of Rules, what did the Committee say?—

> "These Rules are wholly insufficient, and even when they do deal with any matters of importance they are so badly worded and so unintelligible that it is almost impossible for anybody to understand them, and even if they were plain they are not brought properly before the men."

That was a scandalous thing in this vaunted Government Department, which considered that it carried on its business so well that it had no need to be placed under the Regulations which applied to private factories. The Committee only dealt with a few of the Rules, but in summing up the matter they

> "desired to guard emphatically against the impression that the defects mentioned constituted even an approximately exhaustive list, and the inquiry had not been mainly concentrated on one particular house in the factory."

All the evidence was not general, but arising simply and solely in connection with the set of buildings where this lamentable occurrence took place. So that the House did not get from the Report even the opportunity of discussing the gross mismanagement at this Government factory. He had had a good deal of experience in these matters, and had found out that though Committees might report no action followed. This must be said ungrudgingly of the present head of the War Department: that he was the best Minister at the War Office for many years, and for that reason it was well to press upon him the absolute necessity of getting these matters put right. This was not a Party question at all; it was entirely a question affecting the lives of men in these Government factories. In that matter the Department was plainly responsible; and when the House had such evidence brought before it, it was their bounden duty, even at tedious length, not to let the opportunity pass by for insisting that these factories should be put upon the same conditions of safety, and that the same precautions should be used there, as were observed in other factories. Turning again to the Report of the Committee, what did they say with regard to the house where this explosion took place with regard to the engines used there? Those engines were German cam machines. Even in Germany those machines were being disused on account of the extreme danger attending them. At one of the most important private gunpowder factories in England, where two of those machines had been bought at a cost of £3,000, they had to be given up after a few weeks' experience, and the capital sunk in them sacrificed, on account of their being so dangerous. Would not the Government also abandon them? It was stated in evidence that twice a day sometimes the plungers of those machines broke down, and had to be repaired on the spot by the men. Another matter to which attention should be called was the absence of fire appliances in a factory of this kind. It might have been thought that though no precautions were taken against explosions, that when they did occur at any rate proper hydrants and appliances would be provided against consequent fires. But the fireman stated in evidence that he had only one small hydrant, and though he applied he failed to get a better one. In answer to Question 1211 he said—

> "I have also applied that hydrants might be laid down to the upper island, but the authorities at the War Office would not allow them."

There, at any rate, was a case where it was not the fault of the Superintendent, but distinctly of the War Office; that in this badly-managed factory where explosions took place no fire engines or hydrants were provided for putting out fires. He wondered what answer the right hon. Gentleman would give to all this. Not, he hoped, the stereotyped War Office answer—delay. If delay were interposed the whole thing would blow over once more and be forgotten. This would not be the first time such a result had followed at the War Office. Who was responsible for this state of things? The last time a similar case was brought before the House the men who ought to have been discharged and punished were promoted and rewarded, while the unfortunate men—but for whose public spirit and patriotism the case would never have been heard of—were punished, degraded, and finally driven out of the factory altogether. He hoped they would not have that result under the responsibility of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and that he would not resort to the old War Office plea of delay. It was a month after the previous explosion before a Committee was appointed, and a month after the Report was made before it was laid on the Table, and he very much doubted whether it would have been produced yet but for the subsequent explosion forcing the hand of the War Office. Let the right hon. Gentleman not tell the House that the opinions of experts must be obtained. They had been obtained. Colonel Majendie, Professor Abel, and all the experts had been examined. The chief complaint against the War Office was that they had no experts at Waltham Abbey. Good heavens! At what other factory like this in the world would a colonel of artillery be allowed to be appointed Superintendent? Hon. Members had been instrumental in getting civilian Superintendents appointed at Woolwich, and he was really sorry to see a good officer really degraded by being placed in such a position. The Committee had stated that it was time this system should cease at Waltham Abbey, as it had ceased at Enfield. The lives of hundreds of men ought not to be left at the mercy of ignorance and inexperience. Could not, at any rate, the War Office carry out two recommendations of the Committee, for which no further expert was required, and for which no further delay or consideration was required? The Committee recommended that if they could not manage this factory better than they had done (and they had not reformed after long experience) it should be put under Home Office inspection. The adoption of those two recommendations would go a long way to remove the evils complained of. While the matter was being delayed the lives of men were in jeopardy in these buildings, while work was going on night and day, Sundays and week-days. They were replacing these buildings for manufacturing cordite as they were, only substituting brick instead of wooden walls—without other alteration. And no change was made in the rules or practice at the factory. If the Department asked for further time the House could not give it them. These were not questions for the opinions of experts, but matters of common sense. It was only common sense that these factories should be regulated in the same way as private establishments; and as the Government were responsible for the lives of these men, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see that this work was carried on with ordinary precautions not only for the protection of property, but, what was far more valuable, the lives of the men engaged in it.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): Sir, I entirely sympathise with my hon. and gallant Friend opposite in the deep interest which he naturally takes in this subject, and I fully appreciate also the importance which the House at large must attach to it. At the same time, I should not be doing my duty or expressing my feelings if I did not protest in strong terms against this particular method and this particular time being adopted for bringing it before the House. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of the urgency of the matter, but he could only use that plea if there had been on the part of the Secretary of State or of the Financial Secretary any neglect of duty, any undue delay, or any disposition to hide the facts from the House or to ignore the importance of the question. There has been no such delay, no such secrecy, and no such neglect. From the very first moment to the last we have done all that has been in our power to meet what we believe to be the necessities of the case, and therefore I should have thought it more in accordance with the conditions of Parliamentary procedure to have waited until the legitimate opportunity was afforded by the Army Estimates, rather than to interrupt perhaps the most important business of the Session with the consideration of a subject which, though important, is not of that degree of urgency with which hon. Gentlemen opposite profess to regard it. I need not waste time in expressing my feelings with regard to these explosions, my sympathy with those who had suffered by them, and my sense of their great significance. We have shown at the War Office our sense of their importance by the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the matter thoroughly. My hon. and gallant Friend cavilled at the appointment of that Committee because Lord Sandhurst, the Under Secretary, was Chairman; but I could not have made a better appointment if I had searched the whole country over for a man to conduct the inquiry. I cannot understand my hon. and gallant Friend imputing, as he did, some idea of Lord Sandhurst being likely to make a one-sided Report.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I beg pardon; I did nothing of the sort.

*MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the hon. and gallant Member meant anything he meant, I suppose, that an official like Lord Sandhurst would be apt to gloss over anything like backsliding or errors on the part of the Department. Is there any sign of that in the Report? On the contrary, the very Report which Lord Sandhurst's Committee had supplied hon. Members with furnishes all the materials for their denunciations of the War Office in this matter. I do not at all defend the state of things which has been disclosed by the inquiry. I deplore the fact that it is evident there has been great want of discipline and a great want of good arrangements in these very delicate processes. There is no doubt about it, or about what the Committee, after a long and minute inquiry, has recommended. But all the recommendations which the Committee have made have been, so far as the War Office is concerned, put into force. Instructions have been given by the Financial Secretary that with the greatest stringency the particular alterations of system recommended by the Committee should be carried into effect. The whole subject which the Committee had to deal with is divided naturally into two parts. It is so dealt with in their Report: first of all, the particular circumstances of the house in which the explosions took place and the precautions to be taken to prevent their recurrence; and, secondly, the general question of danger buildings not only at Waltham Abbey but at Woolwich and other places under control of the War Department. That, of course, would be a more complicated matter, which would take a longer time to deal with; and, therefore, the Committee wisely left that part of the subject over and devoted their inquiry to the circumstances of the particular explosion.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Is this the first intimation of these recommendations being put into force?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It may be the first intimation to my hon. and gallant Friend, but the Financial Secretary has directed that the most strenuous efforts should be made to correct the weaknesses of the system that have been disclosed by the inquiry. Whether all the changes recommended have been carried out is not the question. The question is whether they are going to be carried out, and I promise that there shall be no delay beyond that which is absolutely unavoidable. When the hon. Member for Preston says there has been delay, I deny that entirely.

MR. HANBURY: The question is—Will the right hon. Gentleman put the factory under Home Office inspection, and appoint a civilian permanently at the head of it as Superintendent?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: These are questions of policy which affect the future. The most important question is with regard to the precautions taken under the present system day by day against danger. I have no pedantic objection to the factory being put under Home Office inspection, but I am informed, not by those connected with the War Office, but by those who administer the Rules of the Home Office, that it is very doubtful whether it would be to the advantage of the factory to place it under those Rules. They say it would be more effectual and practicable that such an establishment should be subject to periodical inspection and report by some officer of the Home Office. As a matter of fact, it is admitted by the Home Office that the Rules of Waltham Abbey are more stringent in many respects than the Home Office Rules themselves.

MR. HANBURY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman where is the evidence of that?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The evidence of that is my statement of what has been communicated to me by the responsible officials of the Home Office. It is a very moot and debateable question in the interests of security whether more would be gained by putting the factory under Home Office Rules like other similar establishments throughout the country, seeing that the existing Rules are in accordance with Home Office ideas, than by continuing the present system, and having at the same time a special inspection and report periodically by a high officer of the Home Department. Whichever of these two systems is considered to give the largest amount of security I am ready to adopt without any prejudice on one side or the other. The hon. Member for Preston may rest assured that, wherever it is disclosed in the Committee's Report that the existing system is prejudicial to safety, a change will be made without delay. But not only has there been the explosion which is the subject of this inquiry; there has also been an alarming explosion, not in the cordite factory properly speaking, as has been represented, but in the nitro-glycerine factory. Cordite, I am happy to tell the House, has continued to give the very best results with regard to safety and in every other respect. It is a most singular thing to those of us who have no knowledge of the chemistry of these processes that, whilst gun-cotton is one of the most dangerous materials to deal with, and nitro-glycerine is almost as dangerous to touch or move, if you unite these two materials so as to form cordite the danger disappears, and you have a material which can be handled with the greatest safety. As far as the manufacture of cordite is concerned, I need not say that we are in the infancy of the science, and we cannot dogmatise at present as to the proper course to take with regard to its manufacture, but I believe myself that the dangers of this manufacture can be reduced to a very great extent, and we shall, of course, do our best to take advantage of any experience we may gain. The hon. Member for the Epping Division (Colonel Lockwood) said it was a scandal, or, at all events, an unjustifiable danger, to have a cordite factory so near a town with 6,000 inhabitants. I can only say that if the inhabitants, through their Member, object as strongly as they seem to do to the presence of this factory among them, we shall, of course, if that view be enforced as it has been to-day by local opinion——

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I must interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I will not be misrepresented. I did not state anything approaching what he is attributing to me. What I said was that the War Office ought to acquire more land round the cordite factory, so that it might not be so close to the houses of the town.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My hon. and gallant Friend must know that land is not to be had by the mile at Waltham Abbey.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: There is plenty of land.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If, therefore, we are to take a wider space for these operations, I am afraid we shall be driven against our desire to some other part of the country. But in the meantime we are acting under the advice of the very authorities who have been quoted in this Debate—Colonel Majendie, Sir F. Abel, and other men who are the best qualified to advise us. In the plans that have been made for the further reconstruction of the works at Waltham Abbey we shall endeavour under their advice to combine safety with efficiency as far as possible. I do not believe it will be found necessary in general to have on the works such a large quantity of nitro-glycerine as there was there on this occasion. I believe it would be found possible to carry on the manufacture of cordite and yet to have a much smaller store of nitro-glycerine in hand, so that the danger may be as far as possible mitigated. My hon. and gallant Friend complained of a lack of sympathy for the widows and orphans of the men who lost their lives by these accidents. I can assure him that all is done for them that is possible under the Treasury Regulations dealing with cases of the kind. The Government have shown their disposition in the matter by the clause they introduced into the Employers' Liability Bill extending its provisions to workmen in Government establishments. The sums that are given in such cases to the widows and orphans are not intended to keep them without their making any contribution towards their own support. But I may remind my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Lockwood) that he himself went over with my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary (Mr. Woodall) the list of widows and children of those killed, and that he expressed himself as fairly satisfied with the amounts that were to be paid. [Colonel Lockwood : No.] At all events, it was proved to my hon. and gallant Friend that no person dependent upon the men who were killed had been overlooked.

Colonel LOCKWOOD : There were several who got nothing.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : No case of either the widow or the child or the mother of a workman dependent upon him was omitted or overlooked. I do not know that it is necessary for me to occupy more of the time of the House. The Committee, which has proved itself so admirably qualified to inquire into the matter, has all but concluded its inquiry, although it has not yet presented its Report upon the subsequent misfortune at the nitro-glycerine works. I hope to receive that Report in the course of a few days, and our action will be taken upon it. The Committee will then proceed to inquire into the general question of danger buildings, which, as I have said, they have put off, owing to the more immediate urgency of the questions they have already dealt with, and I can only express my firm determination, which I am sure is shared by every man who is connected with the Department, to lose no opportunity of carrying into effect any well-considered advice or recommendation of the Committee, which is likely to secure greater safety, not only to the men who work so faithfully in our service, but in the district in which the works are situated.

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, that nobody who had heard the right hon. Gentleman's speech could doubt that he was fully alive to the importance of the question, nor could anyone doubt that the important announcement, which had been drawn from him as to the steps which were being taken, thoroughly justified his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Lockwood) in bringing the question before the House. He (Mr. Brodrick) must enter his protest against the right hon. Gentleman's suggestion, that this question ought to have been postponed until it could be brought up upon the Estimates. The pledge which had been given by the Government as to the Army Estimates had not been carried out. That pledge was that the Army and the Ordnance Factory Estimates should be brought on for discussion in April, or early in May. He knew that circumstances had been too much for the Secretary for War in this matter, but inasmuch as the pledge had not been carried out, his hon. and gallant Friend could not be blamed for having made an opportunity for bringing this important subject under the notice of the House. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to imagine that objection was taken on the Opposition side of the House to the appointment of Lord Sandhurst as Chairman of the Committee. That was not the case. The right hon. Gentleman had very fairly said that the character of Lord Sandhurst's Report would be the best indication of his appointment. The objection taken by his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Lockwood) was practically that a man could not be a judge in his own case. Inasmuch as the Committee had to go into the question of the construction of buildings for which the War Department was responsible, it was obviously desirable that the impression should not get abroad that the War Office was sitting in judgment upon its own performances. His hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) had stated that attention had been drawn not only by the present Superintendent but by the late Superintendent of the works at Waltham Abbey to defects in the construction of the buildings, and that no notice had been taken of these representations by the War Office.

*Mr. WOODALL was understood to say that the cam houses had been reconstructed, and were now separated not only by the intervening water wheel, but by solid traverses.

Mr. BRODRICK said, that was a very important element in the matter. As to the statement of his hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), if any representations were made such as those suggested to the late Government, the late Secretary of State was never aware of the circumstance, and he (Mr. Brodrick) could not find any reference to it in the evidence. His hon. Friend (Mr. Hanbury) had also said that artillery officers were shovelled into the very important position of Superintendent without having any special knowledge or training, and that it was the intention to remove them after five years' service. All that the late Secretary of State had laid down was that, instead of these appointments being for life, they should be for five years, the object being that if the man appointed did not prove to be the best man for the position he might be removed without having any slur cast upon his character. It was certainly not the intention to limit the appointments to five years. The House itself must take some share of the responsibility for the fact that the buildings of the factory at Waltham Abbey were too near together. The War Office bought the best site it could command, and stinted no money for the purpose. It could not go very far from the town, or otherwise it would have to go to the other side of the public road, which would have separated the new buildings from all the other buildings. The fact that there was a footpath crossing the farm which was taken for the erection of danger buildings was put forward as a complaint in the House, and it was only by the use of the greatest possible pressure that the War Office succeeded in inducing the House to hand the path over to them. The War Office, however, was bound to maintain the path, and he had no doubt that in consequence of this some of the danger buildings had had to be placed nearer together than would otherwise have been the case. He would urge the Government to see that the recommendations of the Committee which they adopted should be carried out at once. The Secretary for War had said that no undue delay had taken place, inasmuch as the Committee was not appointed until five weeks after the explosion, and no Report was made until two and a-half months after the last of the evidence was taken. He (Mr. Brodrick) did not think that at all events there had been any undue haste. He trusted that the result of this Debate would be to bring thoroughly home to the people of Waltham Abbey the fact that the Secretary for War took every precaution against storing large amounts of explosive material except where it could not be possibly avoided, and he congratulated his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Lockwood) upon having cleared up the matter in a way which must be satisfactory both to the relatives of the workmen and to the people of the locality.

*CAPTAIN BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield) said, he wished to congratulate the House on the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down. As a resident near two large Government factories, he was able to speak as to the complaints which were made to the authorities from time to time, and the difficulty experienced in getting the War Office to take action. He felt that there was real urgency in connection with this question, and that, therefore, it was a little unfair of the Secretary of State for War to blame his hon. and gallant Friend for raising the Debate. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman opposite that at Waltham Abbey at the present time there existed alarm which almost amounted to a panic. The inhabitants felt that it was no use relying on the War Office, seeing that there had been four explosions within a comparatively recent period. It was to be hoped that some new Regulations would be adopted and greater precautions taken. Something more than Regulations on paper was needed. The Government manufactories of explosives should be subject to inspection by some authority outside the War Office, who would take care that the Regulations laid down by the War Office were carried out. Had the Secretary of State assured them that the Government factories, like private factories, would be placed under the jurisdiction of the Home Office, the inhabitants of Waltham Abbey would have been able to go to bed at night in greater security and comfort. He trusted that extra precautions would be taken to regulate night-work at the Government factory. Night operations were extremely dangerous, and to maintain an efficient inspection a large staff of Inspectors was essential. Then, as to compensating the victims of the explosions and their families, the Secretary of State had done everything that the law allowed him; but the law was faulty, and he (Captain Bowles) trusted that when the next inquiry was made the subject of pensions and compensation to the workmen would be investigated. The mischief was that at present a man was compensated according to the number of years he had worked in the factory. If he had worked a large number of years, it was probable that his widow would have reached an advanced age, and so much compensation was not needed. But where a young man was killed or maimed the compensation given was not adequate to support a widow and youthful family. The question was one which should at once be looked into.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he did not think the hon. and gallant Member for Epping was to blame for bringing this question forward. The raising of the question at the present time was justified, seeing that the Government had appropriated practically all the time, and the Debate on the Vote on Account was closured. There was only one remark made by the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Lockwood) to which he took exception, and that was the remark to the effect that Lord Sandhurst should not have been put upon the Committee. Lord Sandhurst, who was an old personal friend of his own, had proved himself a most capable and impartial Chairman of the Committee. The extreme laxity shown in these factories led one to wonder whether in connection with the manufacture of cordite things were as they should be. The Committee said they had only inquired as to the gunpowder factory, and had not dealt with the other buildings. The Secretary of State had said that the new buildings were in charge of Sir F. Abel.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that what he had stated was that the best advice had been taken—that of Sir F. Abel, as well as that of Colonel Majendie.

MR. COCHRANE said, he was informed, upon an authority in which he placed implicit trust, that cordite was being manufactured at Waltham Abbey in a very dangerous manner by what was known as the dry process. By this process impalpable dust was given off by the guncotton, which settled in all parts of the building and was liable to spontaneous combustion. From this dust, consequently, an explosion of a violent and destructive character might at any moment occur. Under the Mines Regulation Act particular Regulations were made that coal-dust should be kept thoroughly watered, and restrictive regulations were even more necessary in the case of such a highly explosive substance as guncotton. To enforce what he had said, only the other day an explosion took place in New York which undoubtedly was attributed to the spontaneous combustion of this guncotton powder, manufactured in a similar way to that manufactured at Waltham Abbey. In the case of these kinds of accidents on board Her Majesty's ships they had immediately a Court of Inquiry, and in many cases these were followed by a Court Martial. He could not see why similar regulations should not apply to Her Majesty's factories, which were watched over by Government officials. Some years ago a fearful explosion took place at Antwerp under similar conditions to these. The proprietor of the factory which was blown up was tried and imprisoned, and his manager was sent to prison for a year and a-half. He did not require anything of that sort, but he thought that the Regulations in force in the Army and Navy should be applied to Government factories; a Court of Inquiry should sit at once, and, if necessary, it should be followed by an inquiry similar to a Court Martial.

*SIR W. HART-DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said, this was a question to which his attention had been called very much in the past few years, and he would like to touch upon one point that had not yet been alluded to in this Debate. No one, he thought, could blame his hon. and gallant Friend for bringing this matter forward. His hon. and gallant Friend had made a most temperate and excellent statement, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite had met it by practically conceding all the points that had been urged, and, therefore, the time that had been occupied had not been lost. The right hon. Gentleman told them the Committee had two points to consider—one was the position and state of the buildings in which these accidents happened, and the other was the danger that might accrue to life and property in other Government establishments. There was one point that had not as yet been touched upon. If hon. Members would take the trouble to read the evidence contained in the Blue Book they would find that the cause of the accident was attributed to the fact that the factory at Waltham Abbey had been carried on lately at extremely high pressure. He did not say that all the accidents had happened on that account; but this was self-evident, that on many occasions, which could be proved, more men had been at work in the factory than would have been allowed in any private firm, and that with the aid of the electric light they had been allowed to work day and night. He was not here to ask the Government to give large employment to this or that private firm; but, having lived in the vicinity of gunpowder all his life, he happened to know these private manufactories for years past had had certain Government work to do, and to carry that out and to meet modern requirements these private firms had put up most expensive machinery, and had employed a number of skilled workmen. Now, however, these private firms were failing for want of work, and there was eminent danger of their being closed altogether. But the practical point, apart from any interest he might have in the matter, which he wished to put to the War Office, was this: if they were working these Government factories at a time of peace on such extremely high pressure, what would happen to them if, unfortunately, this country should be dragged suddenly into war, and when these private firms had been extinguished, their machinery sold, and their skilled workmen discharged? This was a very important matter; it was not a Departmental but a National question, and it was for that reason he had brought it before the attention of the right hon. Gentleman.

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: May I explain that all private firms which are able to supply us with the powder we want will have an opportunity of tendering for the supply.

**Mr. ABEL SMITH** (Herts, E.), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to press upon the Government the necessity of taking every precaution against explosions, and to see that the rule against carrying loose matches was most rigorously enforced, as the most deplorable accidents had resulted from laxity in regard to this rule.

**Mr. COCHRANE** said, he wished to ask one question in reference to what fell a moment ago from the right hon. Gentleman, and it was this: would private firms be allowed to make the powder by the wet process, which they considered far safer than the dry process which the War Office insisted upon?

*Sir W. Hart-Dyke*

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: That is a question which I can hardly answer in this Debate.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 139; Noes 184.—(Division List, No. 61.)

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 24th May.*]

SECOND NIGHT.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

**Mr. HANBURY** (Preston) said, the Amendment he had placed on the Paper to Clause 1 was, after "person," to insert "domiciled in the United Kingdom." It would, no doubt, have struck the Committee that as regarded this Estate Duty the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been only too anxious to lay his hands upon every kind of property, upon every person upon whom he could bring the duty to bear; the right hon. Gentleman laid his hands upon willed realty, settled property, personalty at home and abroad, on property of British subjects and of foreigners, and the only thing he excepted was real estate outside the United Kingdom. In all cases in which the right hon. Gentleman was able to touch property, either directly, because it was situate in this country, or indirectly, because it was the personalty of a British subject domiciled in this country—he drew no distinction whatever between the Englishman domiciled in this country and a colonist resident abroad and a foreigner domiciled and resident abroad—upon all of them the right hon. Gentleman laid the same heavy rate, and in the case of all of them he brought all the property into one great lump and charged this heavy duty upon the total aggregate. In this Amendment his object was to exempt realty of persons domiciled abroad, and his reason was that he thought every precaution should be taken to prevent foreign capital being driven out of this country. He feared that the heavy duties to be imposed would have the result of driving foreign personalty out of this country. There were two broad distinctions that could be drawn between the case of a man domiciled in this country and the case of a foreigner or colonist domiciled outside. In the first place, it was possible for him to remove his personalty and not to invest it in the United Kingdom, and if a person domiciled abroad chose to withdraw his capital their opportunity of taxing it would be lost. There was this further distinction in the case of a person domiciled abroad, whether he were living in one of the Colonies or was an actual foreigner living in a foreign State, if they put too heavy a duty upon his personalty in this country, the Government—whether it were the Government of a Colony or that of a foreign independent State, might retaliate by putting equally high Death Duties on Englishmen resident in such Colony or Foreign State. That, he thought, was a very serious danger, He was quite aware a broad distinction ought to be drawn between real and personal estate; he was aware that under the law as it stood the law was that they should tax real estate in this country; he did not deny that for a moment, and he admitted that his case with regard to real estate was not so strong as it was with regard to personalty, and he should be quite willing to see the Estate Duty placed upon realty, though he thought there was a good deal to be said in regard to that point. In the first place, the real estate of foreigners was not touched by the existing duties, but it was brought under the new duty and charged as portion of the whole aggregate property; therefore the foreigner was to be liable for a new duty upon his realty in this country, a duty which would be very heavy indeed. He was not so sure that it was a wise thing to discourage colonists from holding land in this country. For his part, he thought they should do everything they possibly could that was calculated to bind our colonists to the Mother Country. If they put this heavy duty upon the real estate of colonists in this country the result might be that they would alienate the affections of that colony from the Mother Country, and it certainly would not be an inducement to a colonist who had spent a large portion of his life in the colonies to come back to the Mother Country and invest his money in realty. When real property was at a very low value he thought it was well to get purchasers from all parts of the world to take an interest in the land and give to it a value that it had not got at the present moment. He did not wish to see the demand for real property restricted or diminished. Then of course there was the other great danger he had referred to. He thought that more Englishmen held property abroad, in the colonies and foreign countries, than colonists or foreigners held in the Mother Country, and consequently there was the danger that if they taxed the foreigner too heavily they would retaliate upon the Englishmen holding property abroad.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): There is no inducement to do so.

MR. HANBURY said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman could not have read the important manifesto issued from the agents of our colonies. [An hon. MEMBER: Not from the agents.] At all events, it represented colonial opinion, and they said that an Englishman was not taxed upon the property he held in the colonies, and if colonists domiciled in this country were to be taxed they would have every opportunity to retaliate. There was another reason why the realty of a foreigner should not be so heavily taxed as that of the Englishman domiciled in the United Kingdom, and it was this: The right hon. Gentleman had said that a great deal of this duty was raised for the purpose of maintaining the Navy. He (Mr. Hanbury) hardly thought the foreigner was interested to the same extent in maintaining the Navy as the Englishman. He denied that real estate was the thing most interested in maintaining the Navy, whether that real estate were in the hands of foreigners or Englishmen. The gainer in the maintenance of the Navy was commerce, and the disadvantage had fallen on real estate; therefore there were reasons why this tax should not fall so heavily upon real estate. But he did not propose to press the matter with regard to realty, the main object for which he should contend was maintaining the existing state of things which had been regarded as an international agreement for many years. Two great principles had hitherto been regarded in our taxation. The first was that taxation should be levied on real estate in accordance with the law of the land in which that real estate was situate.

That was one of the old maxims with regard to realty, but the maxim with regard to personalty was wholly different. Hitherto personalty in the possession of a person domiciled abroad had not been liable to the duties levied on personalty in this country. No Legacy Duty was paid on the willed personalty of a person domiciled abroad, and no Succession Duty was paid on settled personalty. They might be told that willed personalty did pay Probate Duty and also the new Estate Duty of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the person was domiciled in this country or outside. In that one case of Probate Duty, undoubtedly the personalty of a man domiciled abroad was put on the same footing as the personal willed property of a man domiciled in this country. There was a good and sound reason for that. The duty was paid in that case not because the man had this property—for in the shape of Legacy and Succession Duties he escaped the payment—but because he got certain advantages from the law in this country, and he was charged the Probate Duty because the State performed a duty towards him which forced him in return to pay the State. But now, for the first time, they were going to put the settled personalty and the real estate of the man domiciled abroad in exactly the same position that willed personalty had been hitherto. That was to say they were going to abrogate the rule which had hitherto said that practically he should not pay upon his personalty unless the State had performed some duty for which it could charge him. If they were going to impose this heavy exceptional duty on willed and settled personalty they would have to deal with the fact that whatever they might do the personalty, if a man died intestate, would be distributed not according to the law of this country, but according to the country in which he was domiciled. That was clearly a complication that would arise under this legislation. As Clause 3 stood at the present moment if they were going to levy this Estate Duty on personalty, settled and willed, of a man domiciled in this country, in order to arrive at what that estate duty ought to be they would have to take into the calculation the whole of that man's property abroad willed and settled. But how were they going to know anything about a foreigner's personalty abroad? They had no means of arriving at any information with regard to it. They had thus this position of things. Not only were they going to impose heavy duty upon the settled personalty of the foreigner, but supposing a foreigner had got £1,000,000 of personalty abroad, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had got no right whatever to tax—the right hon. Gentleman was going to bring in the whole of that personalty into the aggregate amount, and levy the Estate Duty on that sum in addition to the small amount of personalty which the foreigner held in this country. A man might have £1,000,000 of personalty abroad and £100,000 worth in this country, and actually in the case of a foreigner that Estate Duty would be levied on £1,100,000. That was legitimate in the case of a man domiciled in this country, but in the case of a foreigner they had no right to tax his personalty abroad. The right hon. Gentleman was actually saying by this Bill: "Although I am not entitled to tax his personalty abroad I will bring it into the aggregate, and if I cannot tax it abroad I will calculate it for the Estate Duty at Home, and he shall pay not only on the £100,000 which I can tax, but also on the £1,000,000 which I cannot tax." He would ask the right hon. Gentleman was it wise as a matter of policy to drive foreign capital from their shores in this way? There was little enough of capital in this country at the present time, and he thought the more they encouraged foreign capital here the better it would be. It would be a most foolish thing, if by any heavy Death Duties they were to drive capital out of the country. Already their Death Duties were the highest in the world; and now in addition to making them higher they were going to make them more complicated by the proposals to which he had adverted, and by charging a lump sum dependent on the value of the estate varying with the amount a man died possessed of, and not with the amount of the legacy. A foreigner would be an idiot indeed if he invested one penny of his money in this country if these proposals became law. They could tax the personalty of a man domiciled in this country, but they could not apply the same principle to those not domiciled in this country, and for this reason: A man domiciled here could not retaliate, but a man with a foreign domicile was either a colonist or a foreigner, and his country might retaliate and impose heavy duties in consequence of the heavy duties this country had imposed upon him and his fellow-subjects. What would be the effect of this? Take the case of the hon. Member for Keighley, who had a large amount of personalty invested abroad. What would happen in his case? He would be taxed twice over for that personalty. Even if the duties were not raised he would pay to the taxation of the country in which his mills were situated, and then he would pay this heavy additional duty as being a man domiciled in this country and having personalty abroad. He did not think that was an equitable principle upon which to proceed. He did not go the length of saying that all foreign personalty or realty ought to be exempt, because the case of realty was not so strong as personalty; but he thought he had made out a case for exempting foreign personalty mainly on the ground that they did not want to drive foreign capital out of this country by an increase of the Death Duties, and in the case of Englishmen domiciled in this country who had works or personalty abroad they did not want them retaliated upon and additional duties placed upon them; so that, not only would they have to pay the heavy duties of the country in which the works were situated, but also these additional duties which would be, for the first time, levied upon them as subjects of this country. What he asked was that they should leave the law with regard to foreigners exactly as it stood at the present moment, and he did so on the ground that he did not want to see foreign capital driven out of this country. Considering that their Death Duties were the highest in the world, he asked that they should not so enormously add to them to such an extent as to prevent foreign capital being invested in this country. Again, he would point out that there would be a great temptation to the foreigner to evade the duty, and his opportunities for doing so must naturally be greater than those of men domiciled in this country. He should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as a matter of fact, even the small Probate Duty on the personalty of persons domiciled out of the country was not already evaded? They knew that there were numbers of foreigners—and foreigners in Royal positions, who, looking to this country as about the safest place to invest money, and the possibility of revolutions in their own country, sent a great deal of capital here. Had the Probate Duty touched these men hitherto? He very much doubted if even the small Probate Duty levied on the personalty of foreigners domiciled outside this country had hitherto been paid to any great extent. He feared that in the future there would be much greater risk of one of two things happening: either the personalty would not be sent over for investment in this country, or if sent by foreigners the duty upon it would be evaded. For these two reasons he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, after the word "person," to insert the words "domiciled in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Sir W. HARCOURT said, he could not help thinking that the hon. Member had moved his Amendment in entire ignorance of the present law on this matter. At present the whole of the personal property in this country held by persons domiciled abroad was subject to and did pay Probate Duty.

Mr. HANBURY: Settled personalty?

*Sir W. HARCOURT said, his statement referred to personal property as a rule. Probate Duty, he repeated, was a duty payable and paid upon administration in respect of personal property in this country belonging to the deceased wherever domiciled. That was the general rule, and the personal property of everybody, whether domiciled here or abroad, was subject to Probate Duty and did pay it.

Mr. HANBURY: What about settled personalty?

*Sir W. HARCOURT asked the hon. Member to allow him to state the general proposition. Settled personalty, as everybody knew, because of the character of the settlement, did not pay Probate Duty.

Settled property did not pay Probate Duty for the technical reason that, under the settlement, it could not come under the jurisdiction of the Probate Court, and it was upon that ground, and that ground alone, that it did not pay Probate Duty.

> "Probate is not granted in respect of the estates generally, but in respect of such parts as are at the testator's death within the jurisdiction of the spiritual judge by whom it is granted."

It was upon that technical ground that property under settlement did not pay Probate. It was not the least in the world on the ground of domicile, for wherever a man was domiciled he now paid the Probate Duty. The consequence of passing the Amendment would be the loss of hundreds of the thousands of pounds which were now paid by persons domiciled abroad under Probate Duty and Estate Duty. [Mr. HANBURY interrupted with some observation.] They were now in Committee, and if the hon. Member wanted to contradict him, he would have an opportunity of doing so hereafter, but he had a right to make a statement on this subject without being exposed to continued interruption. He did not interrupt the hon. Member, though, in his opinion, every sentence he uttered was founded in error, both in law and in fact. That was the general proposition, and there was no rule of exemption in respect of domicile upon that ground. He had stated the general proposition that personalty belonging to persons domiciled outside the United Kingdom now paid Probate to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds. There was a difference with regard to real property, which was charged under the law of the country in which that real property was situated. The hon. Member had contended that the proposals of the Government would have the effect of driving capital out of the country. At the present moment personalty belonging to persons domiciled abroad paid 4 per cent. Probate Duty. What was the proposition of the hon. Member? He would take real property first. The hon. Member said that great complaints were made of the high taxation of realty in this country, and he asked that because a foreign gentleman or an Englishman chose to live abroad and owned an estate here he should not be asked to pay any taxes upon the realty, whilst the English gentleman residing here was to pay such taxes. Would such a state of things be tolerated for a moment, as that any foreigner who chose to bring his capital to this country should be at an advantage compared with English capitalists? The proposition was absurd, and it was hardly possible to treat arguments of this kind seriously. Probate Duty was now put upon personalty, and was not put upon settled personalty, and that was one of the very evils the Government proposed to remedy. If free personalty was to be charged, then settled personalty ought also to be liable to this tax; and if both were liable, then real property ought to be. He thought the right hon. Gentleman's argument about driving capital abroad was absurd. The Amendment struck not only at the root of the proposal in the clause, but against taxation on all property. If carried it would be absolutely ruinous to the existing sources of the Revenue of the country. He was sure his predecessor in the Office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—whom he saw opposite—would not be a party to the depletion of the Revenue, or to striking a blow at the resources of the country. The Amendment, if carried into effect, would deplete by hundreds of thousands of pounds the resources already at the command of the Government; and, of course, they could not think of accepting it.

*MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Buteshire) said, he should not have intervened—for he did not know that he was altogether disposed to support the Amendment—if he had not thought that if a silent vote was given many observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be misunderstood. In his anxiety to defend himself against the Amendment the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to go a great deal too far, and to leave out of view some of the very real dangers pointed out by the hon. Member for Preston. It was quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, that at this moment the Probate Duty was payable independently of the domicile of the deceased. But why was that? It was because Probate Duty was not so much a tax in the proper sense of the word as a payment in exchange for a service rendered. What the State gave in exchange for Probate Duty was an active title to ingather the estate which the executor otherwise would not have; and that was the distinction between settled and unsettled property. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out that Legacy and Succession Duty were payable on realty but not on personalty where the deceased was domiciled abroad. Again, he asked, why? The answer was because that was really a tax, and in accordance with the view which had always prevailed in the law that moveables followed the person, it was not right to put a tax on moveables in the estate of a person—that was to say a foreigner—domiciled abroad. On the other hand, if a foreigner chose to buy real property in England, he in one sense became an Englishman, and it was out of the question to say that an Englishman should pay a tax on real property, but that if a foreigner came and held it he should be exempt. That was because it was a proper tax. That being the state of the law at present, what did the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to do? Of course, here they were bound to take the Bill as it stood—to take the whole scheme as it would stand if passed into law. What the right hon. Gentleman proposed was this: he wished—and they all admitted that it was a very admirable wish—to reduce the number of Estate Duties and to crush into the Estate Duty the three duties previously known as Probate Duty, Estate Duty, and Account Duty. They should remember what happened with the Probate Duty at present. Although the right hon. Gentleman was quite right in saying that Probate Duty did not depend on domicile, yet he forgot the second proposition—that the incidence of the Probate Duty did depend on the local situation of the estate. At present Probate Duty was only paid on property which fell within the letters of administration so that the domiciled foreigner, though he had to pay a return for the active title which the State gave him, did not pay a sou for any property he had at home. In order to mass together the three duties, the right hon. Gentleman proposed in Section 1 that the Estate Duty should be charged upon the principal value of all property which passed, and in Section 3 he again spoke of all property passing. The dangers the hon. Member foreshadowed here were real and not imaginary. If the Bill passed in its present form it would impose on the foreigner a duty which he had never paid before, and which it was absolutely impossible to defend on any ground of equity or common-sense. He also agreed with his hon. Friend that the imposition of these duties would be followed by the real and practical danger of driving capital out of the country. He was not going to repeat the hon. Member's argument, but he ventured to say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his anxiety to combat the hon. Member, really did not take note of that which was the true weight of the hon. Member's speech, and did not notice these dangers at all. The right hon. Gentleman had rather attacked the hon. Member for wishing to do that which he (Mr. Graham-Murray) was sure he did not wish to do. The right hon. Gentleman represented that the hon. Member wanted the foreigner to be exempted from all payment in regard to real property. His hon. Friend did not wish to do anything of the kind. He only wished that duty should be levied on the property for which the State here did something. Probably effect would be best given to these cogent views when the question of aggregation came before the Committee, when a judiciously-worded Amendment would avoid all the dangers which had been pointed out without running into the extreme with which alone the Chancellor of the Exchequer had dealt in his speech.

*Mr. BYRNE (Essex, Walthamstow) said, he was not surprised that his hon. Friend had moved the Amendment. No doubt, like a great many of them, the right hon. Gentleman had been puzzled to know exactly what was meant by this clause. But it was very doubtful whether what the hon. Member wanted would be met by the Amendment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had now assured the Committee that the duty which he intended to impose was a Probate Duty; but, as far as anyone could understand, the duty proposed in the Bill was not a Probate Duty at all. It was going to include the duty which had hitherto been charged as Probate, but in effect it would be a sort of Succession or Legacy Duty, that was to say, to be paid by the beneficiaries. As the clause stood, it would levy a duty on property which had never yet been liable, and which ought not to be liable, to Probate Duty, and in respect of which it could not be levied—he meant real property situated abroad. Probate Duty had always been levied in this country on one set of property and on no more. You see that it is necessary to obtain the appointment of an executor or administrator, for and upon that Probate Duty was paid. The moment the two duties were mixed up together, however, they were plunged into a sea of difficulties. If Clause 2 were meant to be an inclusive definition, it would get rid of the difficulty; but there was no assurance that that was so.

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I should have thought a short answer would have been given to my hon. and learned Friend. I do not think the Amendment should be supported at this point, but it raises some very important questions. The whole question of Death Duties on properties situated in one country and belonging to persons domiciled in another, or *vice versâ*, is well deserving of attention. The question has frequently puzzled the Inland Revenue Department; the colonies have taken the greatest interest in it; and the Amendment ought not to be brushed aside as a frivolous Amendment to which no attention ought to be paid. The Committee must see that if you put too high a tax on foreign capital temporarily in this country the property belonging to a person domiciled abroad—that capital will be withdrawn. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he presumed that persons in this country would not desire that capital belonging to foreigners should be retained in this country. But generally the feeling on both sides of the House will be that as little difficulty as possible should be placed upon the ebb and flow of capital from one country to another. One point the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has failed to note is of great importance. He pointed out that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston would abolish even the existing Probate Duty by his Amendment. The hon. Gentleman contests that point. But if he were right the Amendment could not be supported. I admit that in the frankest manner. Although the present 4 per cent. duty on foreign property may not be excessive, it is a very different question when as much as 8 per cent. is concerned, especially if there are high duties in the other country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that there was a 10 per cent. Death Duty in the Colonies. A person dying in the colonies with property in this country might, therefore, have to pay 18 per cent. That would make it very difficult for capital to be held in the two countries. The increase of the duty is a material fact in the case.

Sir W. HARCOURT: The man must be a millionaire for those figures to be correct. It is always the millionaire.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I wish that the right hon. Gentleman would argue these questions without importing prejudice. It is not the interest of the millionaire which is in question. I am arguing in a business-like way. I am pointing out that it is the interposition of difficulties which may prevent capital flowing between the two countries, and whether a man has a million or a quarter of a million the difficulty will arise, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to take it into account. Take the case of the millionaire. Suppose he had £800,000 in the colonies and £200,000 in this country. Such a man dare not keep the £200,000 here as he grows old, because it would involve him in a duty on a million. That is a point with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not dealt. Does not the right hon. Gentleman see that in such cases the system of aggregation is exaggerative, and that it cannot hold water in any practical discussion? It will disturb the relations of capital between two countries. However scoffingly the right hon. Gentleman may treat the Amendment, that is a point which deserves an answer. The enormous increase of the duty, the extension of it to settled property, and the introduction of the element of aggregation are all points on which it is important to appreciate the novelty which this Budget will produce. We are not merely engaged in a controversy between the two sides of the House. The right hon. Gentleman will see that a matter so thoroughly affecting the colonies was deserving of serious attention. Therefore, I think my hon. Friend has been right in raising this question of domicile, though there may be more convenient forms of giving effect to the object of the Amendment.

*SIR W. HARCOURT: The fundamental reason why we object to this Amendment is because, in our opinion, capital, whether personalty or realty, should be charged on equal terms in this country to the native and domiciled people of the country and to those who hold property here and are domiciled elsewhere. Any other distinction would be intolerably unjust. Would English capitalists endure that foreigners should bring their capital here and avoid the taxation to which English capital is subjected? He did not see present the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield; but the proposal was enough to make every hair on his head stand on end. It would involve the marking of every investment and every sovereign as foreign property that is not to be liable to the same taxation as English capital. It is impossible to entertain such an idea seriously. I ask the Committee to conceive the position of a Frenchman establishing a mill in Manchester, and it being asked that he should pay a lower rate of taxation than an Englishman with another mill next door. It is impossible to argue this question, because the contention is absurd on the face of it. The hon. Member said that foreigners had not the same interest in the naval defence of the country. That is the ground on which the foreigner is asked to pay at a lower rate than the Englishman.

MR. HANBURY: I said it applied to realty.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Well, take it as applying to realty, the foreigner, therefore, who holds landed estate in England is not to pay the same taxation as the English gentleman because he has not the same interest in the safety of the country. That is the argument laid before the House of Commons. I really must be excused from treating it seriously. I invite hon. Gentlemen opposite to place it before another tribunal as well, and they will probably find that the same answer will be given as the House of Commons will give to it this evening.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman ought to attempt to understand the views of the Opposition, and to deal with the serious points that have been raised. The right hon. Gentleman's favourite method of argument—it is very clear, and I compliment him upon it—is to seize on one weak point of an adversary's case, and to work it to death, giving the "go-by" to the other points of the case.

SIR W. HARCOURT: The weak point is the Amendment.

MR. GOSCHEN: There may be some defect in the wording of the Amendment, but I urge that the serious portion of the argument must be dealt with, and that is the question of aggregation. The right hon. Gentleman says the foreigner is to stand precisely on the same footing as the native of this country; and then, in his usual manner, he says that another tribunal may decide upon the issue. I wish to argue the question in the spirit of Committee, and not in the spirit of Party contest.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have argued the question on the wording of the Amendment as it stands, and that is the proper business of the Committee. If the right hon. Gentleman admits that the Amendment cannot be sustained let the Committee get rid of it.

MR. GOSCHEN: It is the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to suggest improvements in the Amendment with a view to obtain an issue out of what may be a real difficulty. There are sufficient difficulties connected with this matter to make that course very desirable. The right hon. Gentleman makes a kind of appeal to the country. He says—"See the benefit that is proposed to be given to the foreigner." Does the right hon. Gentleman not know that when a foreigner leaves his property in the shape of legacies it is placed on a different footing from the property of those who are domiciled in this country? The argument of the right hon. Gentleman about the foreigner is ridiculous. Surely the colonists deserve some consideration in the matter. If the right hon. Gentleman will look up the archives of the Treasury he will see that the question of the Death Duties as it affects foreigners has led to difficulties. There is a serious question involved in this Amendment, and it deserves serious consideration.

*MR. ROBY (Lancashire, Eccles) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, would best assist the Committee if with his knowledge of the subject he would not cast his shield of protection over unfortunate Amendments of this kind, and bring forward arguments which did not apply to this question, but might apply to something else. The point of aggregation arose on Clause 3, not on the present clause. If the right hon. Gentleman desired to exempt the foreigner from the costs of aggregation, let him put down an Amendment to Clause 3. The point they had to decide in connection with Clause 1 was, who were the persons to be subjected to the proposed duties. He confessed that having listened a good many times to hon. Gentlemen opposite dwelling on the unfortunate character of recent English legislation which, they said, was all in favour of foreigners as against the natives of this country, he was amused to find that the first Amendment brought forward on this Bill was to exempt the foreigner from the duties to be levied on natives holding property in this country. Even the right hon. Gentleman had admitted that the Amendment was not good. Then why should not the right hon. Gentleman advise his hon. Friend to withdraw it and bring it forward in another shape. What was the good of discussing an Amendment which did not apply to the present case, and which, if carried into effect, would have results he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not be in favour of any more than anyone else? The sooner they left this Amendment and went to one that could be supported by argument, the better it would be in the interest of the good name of the House.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he quite understood why the hon. Member for Eccles dismissed the Amendment in so airy a way. The hon. Member entirely failed to understand the Amendment, or the clause it proposed to amend. More time would be saved if the Chancellor of the Exchequer, instead of going into heavy hysterics, would read the first clause and see how pertinent the Amendment was to it. This clause taxed everybody in respect of every piece of his property all the world over. It was a case of Cæsar Augustus issuing a decree that the world should be taxed. Cæsar Augustus sitting in Downing Street had framed this first clause, which was a modern instance of the decree of the ancient autocrat and ruler. It was true by the time Cæsar had got to the end of Clause 2 some intelligent person, probably from the Legacy Duty Office, recommended him to put a little water into his wine, and to modify his decree. But the Committee were now dealing with Clause 1, in which Cæsar Augustus decrees that every person, of the hundreds of millions of persons in the world, should pay duty on his property, whether that property was in the United Kingdom or in China. Surely it was perfectly reasonable, notwithstanding the views of the hon. Member for Eccles, that they should introduce some limitation into the clause before they passed from it.

*MR. ROBY: English Acts of Parliament do not run in China at present.

SIR R. WEBSTER: The Legacy Duty does.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said, his complaint against the clause was that it assumed to run in China, Tartary, and even in Russia. He was only an humble layman, but he submitted that the true principle upon which the taxation of property passing by death proceeded was that when the property was in this country, actually or constructively, then they had a right to impose a tax upon it. But this clause threw a tax on the whole habitable world. There was absolutely no limit whatever, and that being so, it was highly proper that this Amendment should be entertained, and that the Committee should consider the desirability of restricting the scope of the clause to persons domiciled in the United Kingdom. He defied even the hon. Member for Eccles to find any limit to the application of the tax.

MR. ROBY: It is in Clause 2.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said, they were not now on Clause 2. They were dealing with Clause 1, and he would confine himself, as he was bound to do, to Clause 1. The words of the first Legacy Duties Act were as extremely wide as the words used in this Bill. But the Law Courts laid down that there was a necessary limit to the operation of the Act, and that was that it was limited to "the sphere of the enactment"—to use the words of the Judge—or to persons domiciled in this country. Whatever Act they passed it would, necessarily, be restricted to this sphere, and in this case the sphere must be such property as was found in the country.

Mr. HANBURY said, that before withdrawing the Amendment, on the ground that it went too far as including realty as well as personalty, he desired to say that in so far as personalty was concerned he had not heard one single argument against it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made a platform oration about drawing distinctions between foreigners and Englishmen. It was all perfectly absurd, because it was the law of the land at the present moment that no Legacy Duty whatever was charged upon the personalty of foreigners, although it was charged on the personalty of persons domiciled in this country. He would advise the right hon. Gentleman to forego his platform oratory in the House, if he desired his Bill to make more progress. The right hon. Gentleman asked for courtesy; but the right hon. Gentleman should give to the Opposition at least a little of the courtesy he expected from them. It was for the Leader of the House to set the example. He moved the Amendment because he did not want to see capital driven out of the country. It was in the interest of the country and not in the interest of the foreigners he made the proposal, and the right hon. Gentleman knew very well that the Amendment, if carried, would not relieve all taxation from the shoulders of the foreigner.

Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) said, he desired to protest against the statement made by his hon. Friend the Member for Eccles that aggregation was not included in the clause. The clause was based on aggregation, and aggregation alone. Aggregation was the life and soul of the clause. If the statement were made by any other Member of the House he would not have taken any notice of it. But the hon. Member occupied a semi-official position, as one of the Deputy Chairmen of the House, and great weight was on that account attached to his statements. Another matter he would like to refer to was the action of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in dragging in the millionaire. Really, there was no necessity to refer to the millionaire at all. The man with £100,000 paid 6 per cent., and that case was good enough for argument without going to the millionaire who paid 8 per cent.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. HANBURY moved an Amendmeet to leave out in 16 the words "commencement of this Part" and insert "passing." If the Bill stood as at present its effect would be retrospective. But that could not have been the intention of the right hon. Gentleman when the Bill was drawn up. This part of the Bill would come into operation on the 31st of May. When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Budget he undoubtedly believed that this Bill would become law by the 1st of June, and in that case the date of the 31st of May for the measure to come into operation would have been reasonable enough. Now, however, it was impossible that the measure could become law by the 1st of June, and therefore the right hon. Gentleman ought to fix some day for the Bill to come into operation that would prevent its being of a retrospective character. It was for that reason he moved his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, to leave out the words "commencement of this Part," and insert the word "passing."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby) said, that the proper time to settle this matter would be upon Clause 20. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not press his Amendment, but that the matter might be left over for discussion upon the subsequent clause.

Sir R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that having a distinct assurance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there would be full opportunity later on for consideration of this point he thought it might be convenient to postpone the Amendment. He must, however, point out that the question was a most important one, involving entirely different conditions from those which at present prevailed. It would, of course, affect a large number of existing wills.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, he should like to understand distinctly what would be the date at which the Bill would come into operation. The date was important, because he understood that this Estate Duty represented £50,000 a day. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to tell them that the date named would be one after the passing of the Act. If the Bill applied retrospectively he was afraid a great deal of hardship would be inflicted.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) said, the object with which he brought forward the Amendment was to avoid the cost that would be placed upon the small estates if this tax were made retrospective. He was willing to postpone the Amendment until Clause 20 was reached; but he thought he ought to get from the Chancellor of the Exchequer some assurance that the Act would not be retrospective, and that opportunity should be given for proper discussion upon Clause 20. He really hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give him some assurance that the Act would not be made retrospective, in which case he would be very glad to withdraw his Amendment. Unless he received that assurance he should certainly go to a Division.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): With regard to the latter matter, I do not think that the hon. Gentleman need be under any apprehension. I have read this morning, in a leading Conservative organ, that in consequence of the number of Amendments on the Paper, it is feared that the Estate Duty section of the Bill will not be disposed of before the end of this week. I think that is a rather reassuring statement. With regard to the other point I do not think it ought to be pressed now, but that it should be reserved for the House itself to fix the date when the proper opportunity arises.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, the Amendment he had thought of moving was a very small one, framed in the interests of accuracy. The word used in the Bill was "levied," and he thought the proper word to be used was "charged." He had looked at a good many Acts and found that this was the general rule. It was not, however, a matter of first-class importance, although he submitted the suggestion to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Sir W. HARCOURT said, the word was used in both senses.

The CHAIRMAN said, he did not understand the hon. Member to move.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: No, Sir; I will not move the Amendment.

*Mr. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby) proposed to omit the words providing that the Estate Duty should be levied on "the principal value of" all property. He said that these words "principal value" appeared to him to raise the whole question of the new Estate Duty at once. Certainly the House was entitled to fuller information upon the matter. No one, not even a solicitor, understood the Bill as it stood. In his opinion, the Death Duties ought to have been dealt with in a separate Bill, and very carefully considered. The House would, no doubt, remember that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had himself said that a Bill of so much magnitude was worthy of a whole Session's deliberation. It seemed to him that under the provisions of this Bill the Government were attempting to bring about a financial revolution (the clauses of the measure being very vaguely drafted) in order to carry out distinct operations. The first of these objects was the assimilation of personalty and realty, although every Member of the House must know that they were essentially different. The second was a graduated scale of assessment, which increased rapidly from £100 to £100,000, and from 1 per cent. to 6 per cent., but only in regard to 1 per cent. between £100,000 and £500,000, with another half per cent. in the case of properties over the value of £1,000,000. This taxation ought to be spread more gradually at first and continued gradually up to 8 per cent. in order that it might be founded upon a fair principle. The arrangement for the aggregation of the dead man's property so as to make small legatees pay the same as the successors to princely fortunes derived from the aggregate estate was most unfair. An aggregation of the kind suggested must be either very hard upon all the smaller beneficiaries under a will or a gross injustice to the residuary legatee.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I rise to Order. This clause has nothing to do with aggregation. If there was no proposal for aggregation at all this clause would stand just as it is. Therefore, I submit to you, Mr. Mellor, that any discussion upon aggregation in respect of this clause is entirely out of Order.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Does not the word "all" imply aggregation?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that the question of aggregation is out of Order upon this clause.

Mr. HENEAGE, continuing, said, that the proposal of the Government amounted to an attempt to mortgage the effects of a living person in anticipation of his death, and was in fact a legislative *post obit.* It would impose a penalty upon all thrift and' good management, and was in his view the most unfair, unjust, and indefensible provision in the Budget.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I rise to Order. Is not the question before the House that the word "levied" stand part of the Bill?

The CHAIRMAN: No, that matter has been disposed of.

Mr. HENEAGE, proceeding, said, that the tax was a charge upon a class of property which ought not to be so burdened. Under one of the clauses of the Bill it was proposed that all the property for assessment should be aggregated, and that all small legatees should have to pay the same tax as those who came into a princely fortune. That was a proposal for legislation of a hotch-potch kind. The "prospective value" which was included in the clause would fall entirely on private owners of property. Those who had laid out large sums on their estates would get no deduction from the Death Duty unless the money had been raised by mortgage on the property. Where urban property was held by trustees and companies nothing would be paid; therefore, private owners would be at a great disadvantage in the management of their estates. In the case of agricultural land, how was the principal value to be assessed? Much agricultural land could not be sold readily, and a great many details in the assessment would take a long time to value. What would become of the smaller legatees during that period of delay? Then the provisions affecting expectations in relation to principal value were most unfair. In one part of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman provided that nothing was to be allowed to those who came into property until everything was settled. In some counties rents would not be received for six months afterwards. The question was whether it was possible to assimilate the Death Duties upon realty and personalty. He objected strongly to the proposal that every kind of property should be brought into hotch-pot for the purposes of taxation.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the words "the principal value of."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'the' stand part of the Clause."

*Sir W. HARCOURT: Sir, a great part of the hon. Member's speech has no relation to the question. I have already pointed out, and will point out again, that aggregation is one of the chief reforms which the Government contemplate. Hitherto injustice has been inflicted under the Death Duties because certain kinds of property have been charged on their principal value whilst other kinds have been charged on very much less than the principal value.

There are three principles of reform which the Government wish to establish—equalisation, aggregation, and graduation. Equalisation, to which I will confine my remarks at this point, can be arrived at by taking a common measure, that measure being principal value. There are various methods of finding the principal value, and I do not wish at this particular point of our proceedings to decide definitely how it is to be arrived at. The clause under consideration is simply a statement of the general principle of the Bill, and it would be improper to ingraft upon it limitations which would be more in place in subsequent clauses. The sixth clause, Sub-section 5, proposes to enact

> "that the value of the property for the purpose of Estate Duty shall be ascertained by the Commissioners in such manner and by such means as they think fit,"

and it then provides for an appeal to the High Court by persons who think themselves aggrieved. I can quite understand that many hon. Gentlemen may not be satisfied with this precise mode of ascertaining the value of property, but I venture to suggest that they ought to wait until that clause is reached before proposing alternative methods, and not to attempt to introduce them in Clause 1. Some people wish that the duty should be levied upon the annual value of property instead of the principal value. Annual value may be a proper element in the consideration of the value of land; but that cannot be said in the case of other classes of property, where the annual value is no doubt very small, but which, if sold, would produce an enormous sum. I trust that hon. Members will once and for all grasp the fact that a great injustice is done to the community at large by not assessing the principal value of this class of property for the purposes of taxation merely because its present annual value was very inconsiderable. Take, for example, the Savernake Estate, a property that has no annual value at all, and yet is of enormous value when placed upon the market. Then there is the case of the Maplin Sands, lately purchased by the Government for £170,000. They are valueless so far as any annual yield is concerned, because twice in a day they are covered by the sea, but they have a selling value. This is also especially true in the case of building land around growing towns. Is it fair that the inhabitants of those towns should continue to pay high rates for the purpose of effecting improvements which directly increase the value of the land in the immediate neighbourhood, while the owners of the land who directly reap the benefit are allowed to go scot-free? The very principle and element of the Bill is that property of this class shall no longer escape paying its proportionate share of taxation, and that the millionaire in future shall contribute in the same way as other people to the revenue of the country. I assure the Committee that having said that, I am open to consider what are the proper methods in reference to each class of property by which to arrive at a fair valuation for the purposes of taxation. Hon. Gentlemen need not frighten themselves that the proposed method for the valuation of land by the State will be an unfair one. I have lately had an opportunity of asking one of the most experienced gentlemen in London in valuing property what method he adopts, and he replied that the principle he proceeded upon when estimating what would be a fair value of any work of art was not how much it would probably sell for at Christie's, but what sum he would, were he a dealer, give for it, expecting to sell it again at a reasonable profit. That appears to me to be a fair and proper line of argument to apply to the valuing of land for the purposes of taxation, and one likely to work out far more equitably than taking as the standard of valuation so many years' purchase. Any fixed rule, I believe, would be found in practice to be unfair, and likely to be too low when applied to rising properties, and too high when applied to depreciating properties. That would be especially the case when the question of ground-rents had to be considered, which are often sold at quite a fancy figure. In one case which I recently saw reported in the newspapers a ground-rent with a comparatively short period to run had been sold by auction at Tokenhouse Yard at a sum representing 90 years' purchase. I trust that hon. Members will not discuss this question further until Clause 6 is reached. That clause will directly raise this point. I feel sure that the method now proposed to be employed in making the valuation is one that will work out with fairness to all parties. Everybody knows the difficulty, but I will not go into the details now. The question is whether the principal value is to be taken, and there is no doubt that hon. Members opposite object to that principle of the Bill; but I cannot accept the Amendment.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: The right hon. Gentleman, in the speech he has just delivered, has violated the rule which he has himself laid down with regard to the speech of my right hon. Friend opposite. I shall not touch now on the disputed point, which the right hon. Gentleman says will more properly arise when we come to deal with Clause 6, as to the mode of ascertaining the value; but, though that question is not raised by the Amendment, there are two questions raised by it of great importance, to one of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer paid no attention at all, as far as I can see. As I understand, the existing system of dealing with agricultural landed estate is that the Death Duty, whatever it may be, is levied on the life interest of the man who succeeds. Under this clause henceforth the tax would be estimated, not on the life interest, but upon the capital value of the property to which he succeeds. That is an enormous change, but the right hon. Gentleman did not allude to it.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I beg pardon. I believe that I did refer to it. If not, it was an unintentional omission. I think I stated that it would be unjust to deal with the life interest only.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman mentioned the phrase "life interest." But whether he did or not, that is an arguable point. It is a case which deserves arguing, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has got to argue it. Take the case of an ordinarily landed estate, rack-rented, belonging to the eldest of four brothers, all advanced in life. It is hard to tell how death would strike them, but it would probably strike them in accordance with their age. That property would be taxed at the full rate three or four times in 10 years at brief intervals. Is that a just method of dealing with the Death Duties? I think not. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think this is a fair system as regards the person succeeding, and he justifies the present action of the Government. This Probate Duty had a very different origin. It was originally nothing more than a Stamp Duty. But when you are going to raise it into a system of extorting money from property owners—when you are making it a complement to the Income Tax, it becomes a gross injustice if you are to levy it upon *corpus* or upon the whole value of the land three times in 10 years. In another case, where a healthy young man succeeds, the estate might go for 70 years without a farthing being extracted from it. This is an alteration in the law which requires defending. I come to the next point. The Chancellor of the Exchequer avows that it is his great object in making this alteration to get hold of those properties which are of very small annual value and large capital value, especially those great building estates in which there is very great reversionary value. In my judgment, it is perfectly just that that kind of property should pay its full quota to the burdens of the State. I do not say a word for relieving that or any other land of property from fair taxation. I want to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that this particular method of dealing with this particular kind of property will inflict a very great hardship, not on the millionaires, who are the bugbears of the right hon. Gentleman, but on the enormous class of small owners who own, perhaps, the great mass of property in reversionary values in this country. Why do I say that this kind of tax will be very hard? Supposing a man has cottages which bring him in £50 a year. The property has a large reversionary value, but at present it only brings in a trifling ground-rent. Under the new system what will happen? If he dies, his heirs will immediately find themselves liable to a payment based not upon the £50 annual value, but estimated on the very large capital value, which is arrived at by considering the reversionary rent of the property as distinguished from its actual rent. How is the man who owned that property to pay the tax? He cannot raise it in the market by way of mortgage, and he will be driven compulsorily to sell. I do not mean to say that you cannot now and then raise money on mortgage of a reversionary value, but, broadly speaking, money is raised on the annual value of property. The man, therefore, who has to raise a very large sum, which he would have to raise in the supposed case I have laid before the Committee, could not borrow it upon the property, or upon the rent, or upon the capital value, because it is not easy to borrow upon capital value, and, consequently, you will drive this particular kind of investor to a compulsory sale of some of his cottages. In my opinion, that introduces quite a new principle into our taxation. I do not believe that Parliament up to this time has ever inflicted a tax on any part of the community which had to be liquidated from the thing to be taxed; hitherto, broadly speaking, we have always looked to what is actually got from the property. There may be exceptions in the cases of pictures and other works of art; but, broadly speaking, the taxation of this country has been raised in a form which does not require the taxed individual to sell the property for which he is taxed. That principle, if you carry this clause, you will have for ever abrogated. The small owner who cannot borrow will find himself driven to the expedient of a forced sale of his property—an expedient to which you have never yet driven anybody on whom you have endeavoured to levy taxes. It is perfectly true that it is necessary that these reversionary values should bear their full share of the burdens of taxation, but they ought to meet them when the reversion falls in. It is not what a man is going to get that you ought to tax, but what a man has got. When the reversions fall in you might put a retrospective tax upon them which would make them pay their full share of taxation. What you do is to ask a man to pay, not upon what he gets, but upon a speculative value, for that is what it is. An hon. Member who interrupted me just now seemed to suppose that I was going to defend the immunity from taxation of this particular kind of property. I do not wish to defend it, and think there ought to be no such immunity; but I say that this particular method of catching this property is unjust to the owner, and what you ought to aim at is some kind of taxation which, directly a man realises the reversionary value, would extract from the property the whole of the amount that was due to the State upon the reversion reaching its fruition. Now, Mr. Mellor, I have ventured to lay before the Committee two objections to this method of taxation. The first objection is that it inflicts upon real property the unjust system which now applies to personalty. I think you ought to equalise personalty and realty by applying to personalty the just system which now applies to realty. My second objection is that you are taxing these reversionary properties, not at the time when they ought to bear the taxation—namely, when the reversion comes to fruition, but at a time when the owner probably cannot raise the money necessary for the payment of the taxation, and you are consequently driving him into a forced sale, thus possibly inflicting considerable hardship upon him. I hope, therefore, that the Committee will seriously consider before they assent to a clause the consequences of which may be so serious to all holders of property, whether real or personal.

**Mr. HALDANE** (Haddington) said, the first objection of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down to the proposal of the Government was that it altered the principle on which the duties were levied. In one sense he thought they were all agreed that the principle must be altered. He took it that they were agreed that real and personal property ought to be assimilated.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: Of course, if you properly regulate local forms of taxation.

**Mr. HALDANE** said, he had assumed that another point they were agreed upon was that this was a Bill to raise revenue and not to decrease it, and therefore, as practical people, seeing that they really could not depreciate personalty to the level of realty, they must raise realty to the level of personalty. He took the principle of the Bill to be to impose a duty upon valuation at death. That was not a new principle, although the present proposal was new in its comprehensiveness. The Probate Duty did it, the Account Duty had done it in substance, and the principle was familiar to lawyers in various other forms. All this Bill proposed to do was to make the whole system logical, and this was proposed to be done on the basis that the State had a right to interfere with the devolution of property. The State might refuse to recognise any particular form of devolution, and might decline to let the owner dispose of his property freely. In France the owner of property could not leave it freely, whilst in Scotland he was compelled by law to leave one-third of his personalty to his widow and two-thirds to his children.

*MR. **GRAHAM-MURRAY** said, the hon. and learned Gentleman was mistaken as to the Scotch law. One-third of a man's property in such a case was entirely at his disposition.

MR. **HALDANE** said, he would accept the correction, which did not interfere with his point, which was that a large part of a man's property in Scotland was not at his own disposition. That being so, he would read what he thought was a description of the right theory of the Death Duties—

> "The whole theory of the Death Duties is that the State claims a share in all property passing on death. If I may use a phrase of legitimate exaggeration, a portion of the Death Duty is practically evaded by settlements. From my point of view every settlement, if not a fraud upon the Death Duty, at all events make a serious inroad upon what I may term the rights of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. . . . . Settlements it is true pay a small duty, but nothing as compared with the total to the State which the property comprised in them escapes. I do not feel sure that equity and analogy do not require that a higher duty should be put upon settlements to compensate for the heavy loss to Death Duties which they bring about."

He did not know whether gentlemen opposite would accept this as a fair statement of the principle of the Death Duty. At any rate, those were the words of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) in introducing his Budget on the 15th of April, 1889, and they were extracted from *Hansard* of that date. Under these circumstances, it might be taken that the Government were not putting forward a very contestible principle when they said that realty and personalty should be assimilated, and that there should be a duty on all realty and personalty which passed on the death of the owner. This made it extremely difficult to maintain the first objection stated by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman's second objection was that the proposal was extremely hard upon the owners of reversions. That was an expression which required a definition. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the tax should not be made personally payable by anybody who did not derive a present income from the property in respect of which it was levied. What the Government proposed to tax was not the reversionary interest as such, but the present value of the reversionary interest. This mode of dealing with property was not confined to reversionary values. It was adopted in the case of pictures, and very often in the case of businesses, and also in the case of shares in public Companies. All the Government were doing was putting realty on the same footing as other sources of property. It seemed to him that while, no doubt, in a Bill of this kind there were considerations in reference to which it was difficult to ascertain on which side the balance of advantage lay, it was clear that no other words would be possible for dealing with the Death Duties in the way suggested by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen). The principle of this Bill was one on which it was impossible for the Government to compromise. They would be evading their duty if they adopted any other proposition than that which the Chancellor of the Exchequer put forward, not as something which was accidental, but as something which was of the very essence of the principle of the Bill.

MR. **GOSCHEN** (St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not propose at this stage to state my free views with regard to the points which have been raised. But the hon. and learned Gentleman has just quoted some phrases I used in 1889, and has put them forward as the foundation of the present proposal. I have already shown the absolute futility of attempting to father upon me any responsibility for the present proposal. The hon. and learned Gentleman must look, not only at two or three sentences extracted from my Budget speech, but at the action I took in 1889. He seemed to think that I contended at that time that realty and personalty had been put on the same footing for Probate Duty and for general taxation. The hon. and learned Gentleman must, however, be aware that in the proposals I made I did not treat realty and personalty alike, and it was made a charge against me at the time that I still left inequality between them. I felt at that time as I feel now, that if we endeavoured to deal with the Death Duties as the Government are now proposing to deal with them and put the same taxation upon realty as upon personalty, we should attempt the impossible, because we should be treating as similar two things which are totally dissimilar. In appearance you may make the two things alike, but in substance they will continue to be dissimilar. My right hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has referred to the difficulty of dealing with an estate which might pass through several hands successively and be taxed at every point. In the case of personalty you cancel a portion of your property in order to cover the duties, but in the case of realty you have no security that you will be able to do so. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have frequently disputed by sounds, but have never disputed in argument, the proposition that it is impossible to dispose of realty for the payment of duty as it is possible to dispose of personalty. If that is so, do you not establish a preferential treatment as against realty if you assume that you can treat personalty and realty both alike? The right hon. Gentleman has not attempted to meet the argument which shows that you are putting on taxation which there may be no means to pay.

Mr. W. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that this was not the clause on which this subject was to be determined, but he would ask what would be the position when they came to Clause 6 if they passed the first clause in the form in which it now stood? The words proposed to be left out were "principal value." The right hon. Gentleman said they were to leave the words in, and when they came to Clause 6 they were to settle the mode of determining the value. The first part of the clause merely dealt with deductions from the value, assuming the value to have been already ascertained. When they came to the 5th sub-section, they found it said—

> "Subject to the provisions of this Act the value of any property for the purpose of the Estate Duty shall be ascertained,"

and so on. What was the meaning of the word "value" there? And when they decided that, how would they deal with the principal value? The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of introducing "principal value" as the test of the duty, but the first question that arose was what is principal value? Was there such a thing in existence? In the case of real property there was no such thing as principal value, unless and until the property had been sold. As the Leader of the Opposition had pointed out, there was great difference between real estate and personal property. A thousand pounds they could deal with in cash. If it were in goods they would have a definite value, and it could be dealt with accordingly; but that was not the case with real estate. A man could not realise the value of land unless he parted with it, and then it was no longer his. True, the land might be sold, but it was surely not proposed that in taxing in this way they were going to oblige every landowner to sell his property to ascertain what the tax might be. Under the Bill, the value would have to be arrived at by valuation, and everyone knew in cases of sale how widely the valuation of the purchaser differed from that of the vendor. A valuer, however honest and respectable, was naturally biassed in favour of his client. In his own experience, he had known the difference between respectable valuers amount to this—that those who had to receive the money valued the property at three times as much as those who had to pay for it. The whole thing was a matter of judgment—of opinion and speculation. Was that a proper test for the purpose of determining a tax? It was a matter which was purely one of opinion. By the 6th clause the value was to be left to the Commissioners to determine. Did anybody ever hear of a tax being imposed by any properly constituted authority when, by the mere process of determining the value, those who were to receive the tax might double the amount? It was giving to the Commissioners a power which belonged to this House alone—namely, of taxing, because by the simple process of doubling the value in fixing it they might expose the subject to a tax double the amount authorised by Parliament. These were observations with reference to principal value. There was no such thing—it was an imaginary thing; and surely it was a farce to propose to tax a thing which existed only in imagination. Take the case of land which it was supposed one day would let at a good annual value and which would then fetch a good price. Surely that was a matter of opinion only. A man might hold building land till, like a horse, it had eaten its head off. It was well known that many building land speculators had ruined themselves by holding land with the prospect of getting a high price; had, by waiting for the high price, allowed the annual value to be nothing at all, and by the time they had got the high price they were actual losers by the transaction. Could the House sanction the putting upon landed property of that description a tax which the owner would have no means whatever of raising? There was some talk of levelling up by putting land upon the same footing as personalty, but at the proper time he should be prepared to show that land at the present time, apart from local rates, paid equally, according to its value, with personalty. He could understand the propriety of taxing the principal value in the case of personalty, for they had no guarantee that it would remain for anything like an annual tax to be put upon it, therefore they taxed it when they could, and he did not object to it. But the observation which applied to personalty did not apply to real estate at all, because the latter was always there to be taxed. It was not like money which took to itself wings and flew away, but it would be always there to bear its share of local and Imperial burden, and, therefore, there was no ground whatever for dealing with it in the way they would deal with personal estate. He complained that his own Amendment had not been correctly represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he would show when he came to move that Amendment.

*Sir R. WEBSTER desired to say a few words in answer to what had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane). He was somewhat amused by the air of assumption which pervaded the speech of his hon. and learned Friend. It appeared to him that the hon. Gentleman desired to enforce on the House what they had heard outside in regard to certain action of his in another capacity, and to assume in the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the responsibility—he might almost say the authorship—of the Budget. The hon. and learned Member seemed to put his observation in a position which he thought even his utterances were scarcely entitled to as yet. The hon. and learned Gentleman told them it was necessary to raise revenue by this Bill, and that although they were altering the principle they could not lower taxation in any respect. He utterly failed to see why because it was necessary to raise revenue they should adopt a principle which was radically wrong. The House ought first to determine on a just and equitable tax, and then fix the amount of the tax. The hon. and learned Member said the Government desired to make an arrangement based on logical principle; but did any-one suggest that this Bill was framed on a logical principle? They were dealing with the method of valuing for the purpose of levying the Estate Duty, but so far from that being in the category of Probate Duty or in the position of the Probate Tax on the personalty which the hon. and learned Member had referred to, a considerable portion of the duty was to come out of the pockets of beneficiaries and legatees, who were to be taxed differently on the same amounts. What was the logic of levying a tax in which the amount was to depend upon the total value out of which the particular amount came, and which was to charge one man at one sum and another man at another sum? Their objection to the application of principal value to all classes of property was this—that it was impossible to justly impose the tax unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer laid down certain special and definite rules whereby that principal value was to be ascertained. The hon. and learned Member said the tax should be levied upon what he was pleased to call—he presumed—the capital or selling value of the property at the time it passed. But had he attempted to deal with the case put by the Leader of the Opposition, of a small leasehold property where they might have reversions valued and paid for at their present value two or three times over before those reversions came into possession, or where they might have the reversionary value put at such a figure that it was absolutely impossible even to obtain security on the property? The Bill had not been framed on logical principles as compared with previous systems of valuation, and the Committee would have to discuss at a later stage to what extent this rule of graduation and capital value was to prevail. A good deal was to be said in favour of the theory of graduation when they were dealing with property coming into the hands of a particular beneficiary, but for the hon. and learned Gentleman to say when they were dealing with Probate Duty—which he admitted was a tax upon transfer to be levied on the passing of a particular property on the death of the person on whose decease the succession took place—that this scheme was based upon a logical principle was to entirely forget the basis upon which the Probate Duty had been justified and levied. The right hon. Member for Great Grimsby had raised the question of whether or not the principal value was to be applied all round. In raising that question the right hon. Gentleman had at any rate enabled the House to express its judgment as to whether or not one general rule was to be laid down, but it left open the question of how the definition of principal value or how these words were to be applied when they came to the particular class of property they had to deal with. He should have thought it would have been better if the Government had seen their way to use some expression which would have indicated better the principle on which they proposed to estimate the value; but, at any rate, the Opposition were perfectly justified in raising their protest against a system which put on an inequitable basis taxes which should fall on all classes of property.

Mr. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) (who was received with cries of "Divide!") said, he had listened to this Debate, and he confessed he did not in the least know what they were to divide upon, and those who cried "Divide!" he expected were as ignorant as he was. The right hon. Member for Great Grimsby had moved to leave out the words "principal value of," and he understood him to have explained he made that Motion in order to obtain from the Chancellor of the Exchequer some explanation of the method proposed to be pursued in ascertaining the principal value. The Chairman had put the Question that the word "the" stand part of the clause, and in so putting that simple word had reserved the question proposed to be moved by the hon. and learned Member for Harrow, who proposed to substitute for "principal" the "net annual." If they were going to have a discussion on that Amendment, what was the use of dividing on the word "the"? It seemed to him perfectly idle to do so, for a Division now would settle nothing. He would suggest, therefore, they should not waste their time in an idle Division, but proceed with the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Harrow, which raised the distinct and separate question as to whether this should be the annual or the capital value; and subsequently they would be able to raise the important question proposed to be raised by the Member for the Isle of Wight as to whether the tax was to be regarded as a debt to the personal estate to be administered, or as a tax upon the interests of persons coming in in succession.

Sir W. HARCOURT expressed his entire concurrence with the observations of his right hon. Friend. He was taken by surprise when he found there was an intention to divide on the word "the." They had spent a long time in discussing the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member opposite, and what they really wanted to determine was, whether they were to take the principal value or the annual value. He would venture to suggest that the right hon. Member for Great Grimsby should withdraw his Amendment and allow the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Harrow to come on, when they should then decide on the question, and then they could come to the important question raised by the Member for the Isle of Wight as to whether this tax should fall upon the successor or upon the *corpus* of the estate. Let them not waste their time on small points, but come to the principal matters at issue.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR entirely agreed with the principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman that they should in this most difficult and complicated matter endeavour to concentrate themselves upon the main points of attack and defence, and endeavour to isolate as far as they could the various principles with which they had to deal, so that the issues should be clean-cut issues. But that was not at all an easy matter. He agreed that to divide on the word "the" seemed to be a rather empty Parliamentary operation. But one of the points on which he felt felt most strongly was the question of life interests, and that was not raised on the subsequent Amendments. There were objections to the Amendments of the hon. Member for Harrow. Annual value taken by itself might be extremely hard on agricultural land, and might be far too lenient with regard to reversionary interest. He did not think the real alternative was capital value *versus* annual value. His objection to the Government scheme was that it taxed capital value as distinguished from life interest. He had no special objection to a great deal of what would be the Government's plan of taking the value of agricultural land. Their way might be a fair way of doing it. On the other hand, he agreed with the Government in thinking that taking the annual value of land for great reversionary interests was most unduly liberal to the present owners; but he did not think it was a fair way of dealing with reversionary interests to say they had to be taxed, and pay on death the full value of that reversion. Whether the word "the" in its abstract emptiness really was the best word to divide upon he could not say, but as the matter stood he should prefer to divide upon that word.

*Sir W. HARCOURT said, the right hon. Gentleman liked the word "the," and he did not agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman below the Gangway on the question of annual value. He did not really wonder at that, because he did not think it would bear discussion for five minutes. But why did the right hon. Gentleman not give them an Amendment which represented his own view? That would be a thing worth dividing upon. He observed a remarkable absence of Amendments from responsible Members of the Opposition—from the Leader of the Opposition and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer—and he was not surprised at that. They were, he thought, entitled to ask that the gentlemen responsible for the Opposition should tell the Chairman what they wished to divide on, and not invite them to divide upon an abstract "the," which was not the most useful way of occupying the time of Parliament. If the right hon. Gentleman would tell them what views would commend themselves to him, they should understand where they were. But what was the use of dividing on the word "the," and then having the Amendment from the hon. and learned Member for Harrow, which the Leader of the Opposition had indicated he could not support. Surely that was not the way to reach that clean cut issue which the right hon. Gentleman desired to reach.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he did not know whether it had ever been the duty of an Opposition to suggest an alternative Budget. One of the difficulties they had in making any suggestion in this Budget was that they were constantly and necessarily hampered by the fact that a Resolution had to be passed in Committee before they could move a positive suggestion of any kind whatever, therefore they found themselves in a difficulty at every turn in framing a substantive Resolution. What he would suggest at the present moment was that they should divide upon the words "the principal." That, he thought, was a fair enough proposition.

Sir W. HARCOURT hoped the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman would be accepted, as he regarded it as a business-like suggestion. If they adopted it, and divided on the words "the principal," they could then proceed with other Amendments which raised important points.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (who was received with cries of "Divide!") said, the "principal value" of hon. Members opposite seemed to be to prevent Debate, and the "principal value" of the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to be to impart irrelevant and rather bitter remarks into the Debate. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Harrow would not meet the case, because this dealt not merely with real property but also personal property. They could not take the annual value of personal property, and it would be impossible to explain the meaning of the words "principal value" in the clause. The reason was this: that, to his mind, the clause had been drawn with a set purpose of committing the House at the first stage to the whole of the Bill. If the Committee swallowed this clause it would swallow the whole of the Bill, including some parts which would have to be brought up again for the purpose of being rediscussed. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had founded his argument on an assumption that in this matter real estate only was dealt with. He had also stated —and the hon. Member for East Lothian had restated it—that the object of the clause was to assimilate real estate and personal estate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had expatiated on the hardships of charging realty on annuity instead of principal value. He was not prepared to say that it was impossible to charge realty on an annuity where the fee simple passed, but the fee simple only passed in a small minority of cases. As a rule, what passed was not the fee simple, but the life interest, and in those instances the full value was charged, inasmuch as they charged the successor with the full value of the annuity he got. In the case of the passing of the fee simple the full value of the estate should be charged, but those cases were only a small proportion of the cases in which Succession Duty was paid. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer shook his head; but would he favour the House with the figures on this subject, which he must have got for his own information. It increased their difficulties to deal with this matter without the figures. He felt sure that if the right hon. Gentleman would produce the figures the Committee would see that in the vast majority of cases the successor to real estate did pay on all he got. This was no place to put in the method of dealing with the property. The words "principal value" were in their wrong place, and the proposal to omit them was quite proper. Their inclusion now would render it impossible to discuss very important elements in succeeding portions of the Bill.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham. W.): I think we have really got into a practical difficulty, and it would not be creditable to the business capacity of the House of Commons if we did not find some way out of it. It is evident that there are three separate questions which may be raised on the words "principal value." There is the question raised by the Amendment of my right hon. Friend beside me. He desired to have information as to the method of valuation to be adopted. He was answered in a most conciliatory and satisfactory manner by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The object of my right hon. Friend has therefore been attained, and he will, no doubt, be ready to withdraw his Amendment to make room for a new question. The second question raised was that of the hon. and learned Member for Harrow, whether annual value shall be substituted for principal value. That is a proper question to raise, but, inasmuch as the official Members of the Opposition will not be able to support him, and as my hon. Friends and myself will also be unable to support him, it is obvious that, although my hon. and learned Friend may raise an interesting discussion, he cannot take a Division of any considerable importance. It is not likely that he will be supported by any large section of the House, therefore I venture to suggest that no great harm would be done if my hon. and learned Friend sees fit to withdraw his Amendment. Then there comes the third question raised by the proposed Amendment of the Leader of the Opposition. Passing over the question of whether it is customary for a Leader of the Opposition to move Amendments to a Bill, I would suggest that if the Committee passes the words in the way proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the Leader of the Opposition will not be in Order subsequently in raising his very important Amendment. The present is, therefore, the only time at which to vote on the Amendment of the Leader of the Opposition, which will doubtless have the very large support of the Members of the Opposition. I do not speak for the whole of them. As no one has been able to suggest any other way out of the difficulty, I appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Harrow not to press the Amendment at this stage, but to bring it forward on Report if he sees fit to do so, and to allow the Committee to divide now on the proposal of the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. W. AMBROSE** said, he hoped the Committee would give him credit for not wishing to place difficulties in the way of the Committee or in the way of the raising of a clear issue. He could not help saying, however, that it was rather hard that he should be called upon to withdraw his Amendment before he had moved it or had been heard upon it. His plan was to tax the product of the land instead of something undefinable—namely, the imaginery capital value. However, he did not wish to stand in the way of an issue being taken. He hoped they would have a vote of the House on the Question whether the words "principal value" should remain. If they were allowed to pass it would be necessary to pay on capital value. As he had not yet moved his Amendment, it was not necessary to withdraw it. He was ready to fall in with any arrangement that might be proposed.

**Mr. BARTLEY** said, he looked upon the words "*corpus* value" as an essential part of the Bill. He thought the only question was that the *corpus* or principal value should be ascertained fairly, so that no one should pay on more than they enjoyed. If the word "principal" were left out it would make the first clause agree better with Clause 6.

*__Mr. BYRNE__ said, he would point out, as a reason for omitting the word "principal," that the duty it was proposed to impose combined the old Probate Duty and what was really a Succession Duty with reference to land, and a great deal of personal property besides. If that were so, in putting in the word "principal" they would be using a correct expression with reference to what would be equivalent to the old Probate Duty, but an improper expression with reference to what would be received as Legacy and Succession Duty. If they admitted the word here he was certain it would lead to nothing but confusion.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: We have now arrived at a settlement of the question. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment that perhaps the word "the" ought to stand. I would ask him to withdraw his Amendment, and then either he or I will move to omit the word "principal."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the word "principal."—(*Mr. Heneage.*)

Question put, "That the word 'principal' stand part of the Clause."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 216; Noes 189.—(Division List, No. 62.)

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour,*)—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

## INDIAN RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

### (No. 184.)

### COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

**Mr. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.) said, he did not intend to oppose the Bill, as he understood from the Secretary of State for India that it was an important and urgent measure for India. There were, however, one or two matters he should like to refer to when the clauses were reached.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 3.

**Mr. BARTLEY** said, that Sub-section 1 said that the railways should be "actually completed" before the section applied. Did that mean that the whole railway should be completed, or simply a portion of it? The clause seemed to be vague. The payment of interest out of capital should not extend to all the railway systems, but to certain sections. He should like an explanation of Sub-section 4, which said that a certain part of a railway might be in running order, and still payments out of capital might continue to be made as interest. That seemed to him a questionable arrangement. He should also like to have an explanation of Sub-section 6, which said that no such interest should accrue to any shareholder during the time which any calls might be in arrear. That seemed a drastic provision. Perhaps the Secretary of State would tell him that he had power to consider details, and that he would rectify any injustice which might be done.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) said, that the railways mentioned in Sub-section 1 were railways actually completed and open for traffic. As to net earnings of railways, he intended Sub-section 4 to be explanatory of Sub-section 1, its object being to prevent interest being increased beyond 4 per cent. As to the 6th sub-section, no doubt it was drastic, but drastic legislation was required in this matter, and he was strictly following the legislation of this House with regard to English railways. He had not gone beyond the Rule Parliament had laid down for the guidance of Committees in the House. The object of the Bill was to enable the Secretary of State in Council to exercise the same powers as a Committee of the House under Standing Orders. He was obliged to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bartley) for not opposing the Bill any further. It was true that at a time when labour and material was cheap it was fitting that the construction of railways, which were very much wanted in India, should be entered upon.

MR. BARTLEY said, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if, on Report, he would consent to put in a clause to limit the period of the Bill? As he took it, the Bill was intended to last in perpetuity. He could not find any restricting period in it, and he thought that such a measure, which allowed an indefinite number of railways to be created, and allowed interest to be paid out of capital, should come before the House in 10 years, or some other period for revision. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would consider the point.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I will consider the matter.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Thursday.

## EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS CODE, 1894.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he begged to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that she will direct the New Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools to be amended in the following particulars, namely:—Page 16 (Association of Workers), leave out '2. Working men's co-operative societies, their work in distribution and production.' Page 17, leave out 'the services rendered by retail shopkeepers, merchants, manufacturers, and other persons, engaged in distribution and production."

He did not deny the merits of the co-operative system, which had its advantages. It had rendered services to the community, and had an historic reputation, but it had a district trade interest in competition with the ordinary retail interest of the country. When it was proposed to inculcate the views and practice of the Co-operative Societies through the medium of State-aided schools many people very naturally objected on the ground that the elementary education of the young should not be made a subject either of Party, social, or commercial controversy. When objection was taken to the inclusion of the work of Co-operative Societies in the Code the Government put in the services rendered by retail shopkeepers. But obviously it was not proposed to make these subjects matters of public instruction until it was suggested that the work of Co-operative Societies should be put in the Code. The retail traders were quite content that their services and work should remain matters of common knowledge, but they did object to have instruction in the methods of co-operation taught in schools in competition with their work. That this matter was a controversial one was proved by the fact that since the Motion had been on the

Paper he had received information from many quarters of the House that telegrams had rained upon hon. Members from Co-operative Societies begging them to support it. Our public schools should be kept free from such controversies. He begged to move his Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that She will direct the New Code of Regulations for Evening Continuation Schools to be amended in the following particulars, namely :—

Page 16 (Association of workers), to leave out "2. Working men's co-operative societies, their work in distribution and production."

Page 17, leave out "the services rendered by retail shopkeepers, merchants, manufacturers, and other persons engaged in distribution and production."—(*Sir R. Temple.*)

MR. A. CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said, that the subject had been raised last Session, but had been evaded by Her Majesty's Government. The objection was to the mention of Co-operative Societies amongst the subjects to be taught in evening continuation schools. His objection was based on the broad principle that it was not wise or expedient that they should in evening continuation schools, or in any other State-aided schools, deal with questions that were controversial, debateable, or likely to cause a divergence of opinion. Controversial politics and religion were not taught in our schools. He did not argue the merits of co-operation. It was sufficient to point out that it was opposed to trade by individual dealers, and that the teaching of the principles and practice of co-operative trade was an offence to those engaged individually in retail trade. They might be told that this teaching was done discreetly—that the facts were broad ones, and that it was only proper that instruction should be given in them. But it was not done discreetly. The Secretary for Scotland had been good enough to say that if instances could be found where the teaching was not discreet the Department would intervene. Well, he (Mr. Cross) knew of a case where a little girl in her home lessons had received questions to be answered of this character—"State in your reply the advantages you will derive from belonging to a Co-operative Store." ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen said "Hear, hear!" but if they had been in the position of the father of that little girl—a retail dealer —who found his daughter being taught to define the system which was opposed to the principles by which he gained his living what would have been their sentiments? He submitted that such a thing was an outrage. [*Laughter.*] If hon. Gentlemen laughed it showed that they were not bestowing that attention to the matter which they ought to do. Traders objected to the teaching of a system which was cutting their throats, especially as it was being taught now—and he ventured to think that it could not be taught as the Secretary for Scotland would like it to be. How could the principles of co-operative trading be taught so as not to be offensive to the parents of the children? The lesson to be taught was that by dealing at Co-operative Stores people were able to obtain goods cheaper than they could be obtained from the retail dealers. It was, he maintained, wrong to impart such lessons to children in State-aided schools. Statements of that kind might be true or might not, but even if true their teaching was calculated to injure other people. Hon. Members who supported the teaching of these subjects in the Education Code objected to the teaching of religion which was more or less controversial in the State-aided schools. He would apply to these gentlemen their own doctrine. When they lent themselves to any special method of conducting trade they gave that method the cloak of their authority, and it went before the country under a false aspect. He could not understand why co-operation should be taught. He was afraid that the whole object was to puff and laud certain stores in certain localities. He might tell the House that retail traders did not care for the advertisements that was given to them by the reference made to them in the Code. [MR. ACLAND: Yes, they do.] They would no doubt like to have their particular business advertised, as co-operative businesses would be advertised by the instruction that would be given. There was only one Co-operative Store in a given locality, and if co-operation were lauded that store would be lauded. He had that day received a largely signed Petition against the Code, and he had also received telegrams from the Co-operative Stores in the division he represented in favour of the Code. He submitted that the receipt of these communications showed that there was a strong division of feeling in this constituency, and he contended that under these circumstances it was not right that these Regulations should remain in the Code.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, that in an admirable Code of Regulations for evening continuation schools the Education Department, with an impartiality and equality of treatment of both Co-operative Stores and private traders of which every one must approve, had put down in the Schedule of subjects of teaching for young people of over 15 years of age the principles of workmen's Co-operative Societies, and also the services rendered by retail traders, merchants, manufacturers, and others. It seemed that it was the duty of any Educational Body to bring before young people the chief phases and characteristics of our national life. That being so, he could not see what objection there could be to giving equality of treatment to co-operation and private trading. He had read many of the primers supplied to school children, and he found that in every school the works of John Stuart Mill, Fawcett, and the leading economists were used. Did the hon. Gentleman opposite contend that a movement which had 1,250,000 members, and which supplied something like 4,000,000 of consumers, was a movement which related to a subject on which young people ought not to be instructed? The Code did not advocate co-operation. It simply suggested the giving to children of expository *résumés* of the principles of co-operation, and so forth. It did just the same with regard to private traders, and he really could not see how any objection could be taken to it by the hon. Baronet (Sir R. Temple), whom he had always looked upon as an educational expert of great ability, and as one who had done the cause of education in London a great deal of good. It was to him (Mr. Burns) a source of congratulation that in this country there were 28,000 working men's Associations with a capital of £213,000,000, including Trades Unions, Co-operative Societies, Friendly Societies, and Building Societies. If he were a religious man he should be inclined to say that the British people were predestined through those agencies to be a crucible in which all the industrial, social, and constructive political theories of the future were to be developed. To say that these theories were not to be brought before their children was to put back the clock of education in order to please a few retail traders. The co-operators did not ask for State aid. As a Socialist, he was opposed to co-operation in many aspects, though not because he disapproved of many of its principles; still, he did not think that a reason why he should object to the principles and objects of the Co-operative Societies being taught to the children so that they might inform themselves, and in the end choose as between the co-operative system of producing and distributing goods and the private trading system. He congratulated the Education Department upon having drawn up this admirable Code. It would have been incomplete without co-operation and private trading. The hon. Baronet, who had done much for the cause of education in London, was taking the most reactionary step he had ever taken in education, and he hoped the House would not support him.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham) said, he had little to add to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman opposite. He would point out, however, that no School Authority in the country need cause these subjects to be taught unless they liked, and then it was only in night schools. He thought it unadvisable to leave out from their syllabus words which would enable managers to teach the first principles of political economy. It was absurd to talk about money being in this intolerable way—as it appeared to the hon. Member behind him (Mr. A. Cross)—when their own sons in the public schools and Universities—which were largely supported out of public funds—were receiving instruction in political economy as taught by Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and other authorities. If hon. Members as parents did not object to their sons receiving instruction embracing the subjects to which exception was now taken, why should they object to allowing young people of 15, 18, or 21 years of age, who had left the ordinary day schools and were attending evening continuation schools, to receive similar instruction? There had been no desire to stimulate controversy in this matter. The moment the private traders had objected to the teaching of co-operation to meet their wishes the work of the private traders and manufacturers was included in the Code. He was now told that none of the private traders were satisfied. If that were so, he should be sorry for it. Let them agitate against the local School Boards who adopted the Code, and so prevent the subject to which they objected being taught. For his own part, it seemed a most rational subject to offer to managers of schools to teach if they chose. The Code was being availed of by the London School Board, who took great interest in the subject. University men were teaching large numbers of boys these subjects—he was sure in no controversial spirit, but purely as a matter of principle. If the objections which had been urged to-night were to be taken on principle, they would not be able to put any arithmetical problem to a child in which he was invited to go to the grocers' or the butchers to buy so many pounds or tea or of meat. The objections were ridiculous. The House, no doubt, would agree with the hon. Member for Battersea that these subjects should be taught when such instruction was suitable, and to the benefit of those to whom it was given.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that the reference to the Co-operative Societies was on one page of the Code and the reference to private traders on another. Could the School Authorities, if they chose, take one page for instruction and let the other alone?

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he wished to know if the services rendered by the little shopkeepers would appear in the Scottish Code?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, if any Scottish School Board desired to instruct children in the principles of retail trading it would be encouraged by the Scotch Office, and next year the subject would be put in the Code.

Question put, and negatived.

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.—(No. 163.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.—(No. 203.)

Read the third time, and passed.

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

### PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.—(No. 235.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

### POLICE (SLAUGHTER OF INJURED ANIMALS) BILL.—(No. 208.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

## *MOTIONS.*

### CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 4) (BIRMINGHAM CANAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic, and the Schedule of Maximum Tolls and Charges applicable thereto, for the Birmingham Canal Navigations, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Mr. Bryce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 252.]

### CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 5) (REGENT'S CANAL) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade, under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic, and the Schedule of Maximum Tolls and Charges applicable thereto, for the Regent's Canal, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Mr. Bryce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 253.]

### CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 6) (RIVER LEE, &C.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burt, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under "The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888," containing the Classification of Merchandise Traffic and the Schedule of Maximum Tolls and Charges applicable thereto, for the River Lee Navigation and certain other Canals, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Burt and Mr. Bryce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 254.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 11) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. Morley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," relating to the urban sanitary district of Clones, ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 255.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 12) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. J. Morley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Local Government Board for Ireland, under "The Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878," relating to the rural sanitary district of Coleraine, ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Sir J. T. Hibbert.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 256.]

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 18) BILL.

On Motion of Sir W. Foster, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to the urban sanitary district of Kings Lynn (two), the Burnley Joint Hospital District, and the West Kent Main Sewerage District, ordered to be brought in by Sir W. Foster and Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 257.]

### SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROCEDURE) BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 258.]

### MERCHANDISE MARKS (PROSECUTIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. H. Gardner, Bill for enabling the Board of Agriculture to undertake Prosecutions in certain cases under "The Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," ordered to be brought in by Mr. H. Gardner, Sir J. T. Hibbert, and Mr. Burt.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 259.]

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. H. Gardner, Bill to consolidate with Amendments the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, 1878 to 1893, ordered to be brought in by Mr. H. Gardner, The Attorney General, and The Lord Advocate.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 260.]

### EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) (ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS).

Copy presented,—of Report to the Committee of Council on Education of the Proceedings of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, under the Endowed Schools Acts, 1869 to 1889, for the year 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS, AND WELSH INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION ACT, 1889.

Copy presented,—of Scheme for the management of the Funds applicable to the intermediate and technical education of the inhabitants of the county of Denbigh in the matter of (1) the Ruthin Grammar School (2) the Denbigh Grammar School (3) Sir John Wynne's Hospital and School at Llanrwst (4) the Ruabon Grammar School, and (5) the Wrexham Grammar School Exhibition Foundation, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.]

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS, 1878 TO 1893 (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Return under the Acts for the year 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### ARMY (MILITARY PRISONS).

Copy presented,—of New Rule for Military Prisons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS, 1878 TO 1891 (DANGEROUS TRADES).

Copy presented,—of Order of Secretary of State certifying that certain Processes are dangerous or injurious to health [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

### NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING.

Copy presented,—of Annual Statement of Navigation and Shipping of the United Kingdom for the year 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

It being after One of the clock, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 29th May 1894.*

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES** (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, in the absence of my noble Friend Lord Rosebery, I beg to make the Motion placed on the Paper in his name. The purpose is to enable the House to deal with a Money Bill which will come up shortly, but has not yet reached this House.

Moved,

"That Standing Order No. XXXIX. be considered in order to its being dispensed with for this day's sitting."—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

Motion agreed to.

## TROUT FISHING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(No. 49.)

### COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."

**THE EARL OF GALLOWAY** said, as the Bill came on within 10 minutes of the Sitting of the House yesterday, he was not in his place for the Second Reading. He had no wish to in any way oppose the Bill, but hoped the noble Lord in charge of it would see his way to extend the close time by another month. There could be no object in limiting it to the 1st of February; and the object of the Bill being to afford protection during breeding time, he hoped the noble Lord would make that extension.

**LORD LAMINGTON** said, the objection raised by the noble Lord was also raised by the Marquess of Huntly yesterday, and he had already undertaken to see whether it would be consistent with the character of the Bill to make the proposed alteration.

Motion agreed to; House in Committee accordingly.

Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

## INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES ACT, 1893, AMENDMENT BILL.

(No. 28.)

### THIRD READING.

Read $3^a$ (according to Order).

**THE MARQUESS OF RIPON**: My Lords, I have a few drafting Amendments which has been suggested to me by my noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, of which I have given notice, and they have been circulated. I beg to move that they be inserted.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

## RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

### MOTION FOR A RETURN.

**LORD COLCHESTER**, in moving for a Return of the Regulations upon this subject, said similar Returns had been conceded on several previous occasions, once or twice upon his own Motion, and once or twice moved for by Lord Harrowby. That was now some years ago, and in some respects the matter had become of more importance than formerly, having regard to the increase of Board schools, and to the fact that the education of the country now mainly depended upon the action of the School Boards. He was not raising the question at all with reference to the action taken by the London School Board. They had adopted their own course, and no doubt each Board was influenced by the circumstances of its own neighbourhood in using the liberty now given them in the matter. Their Lordships knew that under the Cowper-Temple Clause the powers were very large with regard to the giving or omission of religious teaching in these schools. He was informed that, in a large number of schools in England and Wales, Bible instruction was not given, and in some cases it had been found very difficult to carry on the instruction in the schools. Much dissatisfaction existed with the existing state of affairs under the Act, and the House was aware that a Bill brought in by a right rev. Prelate was passed by that House last year, proposing some alteration in reference to religious teaching. He was not concerned with the terms of any measure of that kind; but he thought it was desirable to have the fullest information as to what the School Boards in the country were doing, and he therefore trusted the Government would see their way to granting this Return.

Moved for,

"Return of the regulations with regard to religious instruction of the School Boards for England and Wales."—(*The Lord Colchester.*)

**Lord PLAYFAIR** said, there had been two Returns of the kind granted: one moved for by the noble Lord himself in 1883, and the other by Lord Harrowby in 1888. Both contained copious Returns, and he did not know that there was much to add to them, but the Government had no objection to give the Return in the form asked for by the noble Lord.

Motion agreed to: Ordered to be laid before the House.

### GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 41.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 42.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 43.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL. [H.L.].—(No. 44.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL [H.L.].

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 47.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 50.)

Read 2ª (according to Order).

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª: Then (Standing Order No. XXXIX. having been dispensed with for this day's sitting) Bill read 2ª: Committee negatived: Bill read 3ª, and passed.

### POLICE (SLAUGHTER OF INJURED ANIMALS) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed.—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*) (No. 74.)

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 1) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 75.)

### PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed. (No. 76.)

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, to Thursday next, Twelve o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 29th May 1894.*

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

### LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL (*by Order*).

CONSIDERATION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [9th May], "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill considered.

**Mr. HOWELL** (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he proposed to move the rejection of the new clause.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! The new clause has not yet been moved. Does the hon. Member for Central Finsbury move it?

**Mr. NAOROJI** (Finsbury, Central): Yes, Sir, I move it; and I am sorry my hon. Friend feels compelled to object to it.

**Mr. J. STUART** (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, the London County Council had agreed to withdraw the clause as it at present stood in the Bill, and to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green. Consequently, they were not prepared to accept the proposal of the hon. Member for Central Finsbury. The circumstances were these: The County Council, when they brought this Bill before Parliament, introduced at the request of certain Vestries the clause as to staircases. Amendments were, however, introduced in Committee, and the County Council had inquired of the various Vestries and had found that there was almost unanimous disapproval of the clause as it now stood. As the clause as now framed came very near to an infringement of the Standing Orders, and as the Vestries at whose instance it was inserted did not approve its present form, the County Council did not propose either to accept it or to insist on its reinstatement in its original form.

Mr. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) then moved to re-insert the original clause (Clause 6). He said, that the Vestry of Central Finsbury having received representations from various parts—there being many buildings of this kind in the parish—that a nuisance was caused by the want of light, satisfied themselves that there was a great deal of nuisance. It was satisfactorily shown by Mr. Walton, the Chairman of the Works Committee, that the owners of buildings who let them for their own profit ought to supply all the necessary conveniences. The County Council thought proper to insert the clause which he now proposed, and he protested against inflicting on the ratepayers any expenditure to redress or correct an inconvenience which ought to be set right by the owners of houses, and for that reason he moved the Second Reading of the clause.

New Clause—

Part III.—Lighting of Common Staircases.

"5. The owner of any building designed for use in flats, or tenements, of which any staircase or passage is used in common by occupants of different flats or tenements, and is open at night, shall be bound to light every such staircase and passage and to keep the same lighted from sunset to sunrise on every night to the satisfaction of the lighting authority of the parish or district in which it is situate, who may, by an order under their seal, prescribe the amount of light and the position of any lights to be provided, and may serve notice of such order upon the owner of the premises.

"Any owner failing to comply with the provisions of this section shall be liable to a penalty of not exceeding five pounds for every night in which he shall have so failed.

"Any lighting authority may, by agreement with the owner of any such building, undertake the provision and maintenance of the lamps and fittings and the lighting and extinguishing of lamps on such terms as may be agreed between them,"—(*Mr. Naoroji,*)

—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said, he was by no means satisfied that sufficient evidence was produced to induce the Committee to accept the clause in the first instance. He thought that the Committee in accepting it had exercised their power in a very dangerous degree. He had made the best inquiries he could with regard to the procedure upstairs, and he found that the Committee had all the power of the House, and therefore had acted within its power. At the same time, he wished to draw attention to what he regarded as a very serious matter in connection with the clause. Private Bill Committees had often exercised the power of altering the incidence of taxation, but he did not think there was a single instance in which they had taken the initiative in imposing taxation upon the people in the shape of rates. The action taken by the Committee on this Bill, therefore, constituted an entirely new departure. As far as he could learn, the evidence produced in favour of the clause was of a very trifling and meagre character, whilst that against it was overwhelming. Singularly enough, evidence was given on the part of the Peabody Trustees and the Guinness Trustees—two of the largest owners of such property in London—and as far as he could learn it was the unanimous view of the tenants that no such lighting was necessary as was proposed by the Bill. He feared that some members of the London County Council thought that the British working man wanted a good deal of regulation and inspection. He was not of that opinion. He held by the old doctrine sneered at by some of the new politicians of the maximum of liberty and the minimum of restraint, and he was therefore strongly opposed to the retention of the clause in the Bill, and still more strongly opposed to the substitution of that which was proposed in its place. If such a regulation was to be made, let the matter be thoroughly threshed out by the Local Authorities who would have to administer it, and let them have ample opportunity, which they had not had at present, of appearing before the Committee. As far as he could learn, all the Local Authorities in London, with one single exception, were opposed to the clause, the exception being the body represented by the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji). The Public Bodies of London certainly ought to have an opportunity of taking action, and preventing the London County Council leading them a fool's chase over this Private Bill legislation.

MR. BOULNOIS (Marylebone, E.) said, he had placed a Motion on the Paper for the rejection of the clause altogether. He hoped it would be rejected, because it had been amended by the Committee in an extremely questionable way ; and if the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart) had not announced that the London County Council would withdraw the clause, he was not at all sure that he should not appeal for Mr. Speaker's decision as to whether it was not *ultra vires* for a Committee to insert in a Bill a clause which imposed taxation without giving any notice to the ratepayers. Even if the Committee had not exceeded its powers, he thought it would be extremely hard that the unfortunate ratepayer, and especially the smaller one, who was just now overburdened with rates, should have an additional rate put upon him for the lighting of common staircases. In a former Debate the hon. Member for Finsbury had said that the lighting of these staircases might be taken at 3d. a room per night. In the Division he represented there were probably something like 1,000 of these rooms, and if the estimate of the hon. Member was correct it was no exaggeration to say that the ratepayers of Marylebone would be mulcted in something like £4,300 a year, or more than ½d. in the £1 on the rates. He had ascertained from the superintendents of many of these dwellings that they did not think it was necessary to light the staircases all night. They were now lighted on five nights of the week till 11, and on Saturday till 12. The inmates of the dwellings stated, he believed without exception, that they would infinitely prefer that the lights should be put out at 11 o'clock, as tramps and the houseless poor were afraid to enter the staircases after dark, and they would inevitably do so if they were lighted. This was another instance of the rather hurried way in which the London County Council carried on their legislation. His hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch (Mr. J. Stuart) said the clause was introduced into the Bill at the instance of two or three Vestries. He thought it was a great pity that the County Council had not inquired whether the clause was necessary before they introduced it into the Bill. He understood that the opponents of the clause had spent over £200 in protecting their rights, and he left the House to reckon what the London County Council paid out of the ratepayers' money in carrying on the contest. He hoped the House would strike out the clause and would reject the new clause proposed.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, he was asked to state on behalf of perhaps the oldest Association in London for the erection of workmen's dwellings that they considered that the proposed clause would be a very great hardship. He was informed that the owners of these dwellings were already hampered in many unnecessary ways under the Metropolitan Regulations, and the proposed clause would throw a very great burden upon them. In the case of the Association for which he was asked to speak, it would throw upon them an expense of something like £10,000 a year. Their tenants had asked them not to light all their staircases and passages throughout the night, as they wished to have the lights put out late at night, just as hon. Members desired to have the lights turned out in their own houses when they went to sleep. Associations established for the purpose of assisting working men to get decent lodgings ought to be assisted in every possible way in pursuing the philanthropic objects they had in view. The proposed clause was struck out in Committee, and it seemed a little strange that the House should be asked to re-insert it without having had the opportunity of hearing any evidence on the subject. He thought it was very much to be regretted that the habit of endeavouring to review the proceedings of Private Bill Committees in the House, more or less on political grounds and without hearing evidence, was so much on the increase. He believed it was likely to injure the power and prestige of the

House as an impartial tribunal for the transaction of Private Business if that practice continued to be pursued.

MR. CODDINGTON (Blackburn), as the Chairman of the Committee which had considered the Bill, wished to say that the Committee was quite in agreement with the views expressed by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) in regard to this matter. The Committee considered the evidence very carefully, and they came to the conclusion that if the authorities had power to compel the owners of industrial dwellings to light their staircases after 11 o'clock at night, the authorities should, at all events, pay a portion of the cost. It was generally understood by the Committee that both parties were quite satisfied with the clause in the form in which it was eventually adopted. To recommit the Bill would be an injustice to the proprietors of industrial dwellings, and he should, therefore, oppose the Motion.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had received a communication from Mr. Morrison, formerly a Member of the House, to the effect that the Industrial Dwellings Company with which he was connected had tried the lighting of their staircases throughout the night, and had found that the result of lighting them was to attract persons who were described as tramps, but might be described by a more opprobrious term. The plan, therefore, now adopted by this particular Company was to put out the lights on their staircases at 11 o'clock. The plan, therefore, which was proposed had failed on trial. He hoped the House would not fall into the practice of not accepting the Reports of Committees. He believed the hon. Member who had spoken brought an impartial judgment to bear upon the question, but the real tribunal was the Committee who heard the evidence, saw the witnesses, and had the opportunity of cross-examining them. The conclusions which the Committee arrived at were worthy of support.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) thought that what had fallen from the Member for St. Pancras (Sir J. Goldsmid) and the Member for Wigan (Sir F. S. Powell) as to the action of the Committee upstairs was altogether beside the point. As he understood the position, before long the Member for St. Pancras (Sir J. Goldsmid) would be supporting the Member for Bethnal Green in upsetting the clause passed by the Committee upstairs. It was not correct to say that the Committee threw out the clause of the County Council; what they did was to take the clause, to accept the principle contained in it, but amending it with regard to the responsibility of those who were to pay for the lighting. He had not heard the evidence taken before the Committee upstairs, but he happened to have in his constituency a large number of these blocks and was conversant with the opinion of the people living in those blocks. He was glad to hear the Member for Bethnal Green say he liked the maximum of liberty; those who lived in these blocks also liked the maximum of liberty and did not like the idea of having to find their way home at 11 o'clock at night, and have to go upstairs in total darkness. There was something to be said for liberty on the other side of the question. He must confess he stood with his colleague for Central Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) in the position of being in favour of lighting these buildings, he did not say all through the night, but certainly up to 11 o'clock was not sufficient for the personal convenience of the working classes. He was bound to admit the position this afternoon was a very peculiar one. The County Council brought in in their original Bill a clause with regard to lighting. That was amended by the Committee upstairs, and this afternoon they found the County Council had run away entirely from the original clause that they had put in the Bill. His hon. Friend had tried to bring back the Bill to where it was when it was originally discussed, and he did not think he had done anything rash in that, but still, as they were in a very small minority, he would advise his hon. Friend not to put the House to the inconvenience of dividing; he would advise him to withdraw the original clause of the County Council and leave the matter where the Committee left it. Then the moment they came to the Committee's clause they were all going to say determinedly they objected to their putting a rate upon the inhabitants of the locality without the people in the locality having an opportunity of expressing an opinion in regard to them. And they were not the only persons who differed from the

Committee; the County Council, and those who spoke on behalf of the owners of these places, all demurred to the ratepayers being called upon to pay for lighting. He felt very pleased that this Debate had arisen, and with all due respect to those gentlemen who read them lectures he would say that if it had not been for the action of his hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) before the House rose for the Recess, they would have had the clause that they were presently going to throw out in its entirety and the rates thrown upon the inhabitants.

**Mr. WHITMORE** (Chelsea) thought they were practically unanimous now in favour of this House rejecting any dealing by this Bill with this question at all. After all, the Local Authorities were the best judges of how this question should be dealt with, and it was only right, he thought, that their views should be followed very largely with regard to it. They stood now in the position that the Local Authorities desired this clause should be omitted from the Bill, the County Council were willing that course should be followed, the Committee who went through the question were in favour of that course, and considering there was such a large consensus of opinion on one side he thought it would be better if the hon. Member would not persevere further.

**Mr. WILSON LLOYD** (Wednesbury) said, it now appeared that the County Council put forward this question of lighting the staircases entirely without proper knowledge of the subject, thus putting the owners of these large properties, valued at £3,500,000, to great expense, and saddling them with a large addition to the cost of lighting. It appeared that was a false position which they objected to in Committee, and they had got the Committee to accept their view of the case. It was quite wrong to say that this was a fixed tax, and that the Committee had done wrong, because it was a purely permissive clause, and gave the Vestry power to light these places if they wished, but the Committee considered that if they did they should pay a portion of the expense. He thought it was greatly to be regretted that the work of a Committee which extended over several days, two days of which were occupied in taking evidence on this important question, that after considering that evidence and coming to a conclusion on the subject, that the House without any proper information should undo their work.

**Mr. NAOROJI** asked leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

**Mr. J. STUART** (Shoreditch, Hoxton) moved the clause standing in his name, the necessity for it arising from the fact that it was impossible otherwise for the County Council to pay the expenses of such recreation ground; it could not contribute out of any rate without the permission of the House.

New Clause.

Clause 14a.

(Power to contribute towards purchase of land adjoining Paddington Recreation Ground.)

"The Council may, if they think fit, expend on capital account a sum of money not exceeding £6,000 as a contribution towards the cost of acquiring land adjoining and to be added to the Paddington Recreation Ground, authorised by 'The Paddington Recreation Ground Act, 1893,'"—(*Mr. J. Stuart*,)

—brought up, and read the first and second time, and added.

**Mr. BOULNOIS** moved—

"That lines 3 to 7 inclusive in the Preamble of the Bill be omitted."

Question put, and agreed to.

**Mr. HOWELL** moved—

"That Part III., Clause 5, Sub-sections 1 to 6 inclusive, be omitted from the amended Bill."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time.

## NEWCASTLE AND GATESHEAD WATER BILL [*Lords*] (*by Order*).

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

**Mr. SETON-KARR** (St. Helen's) moved that the Bill be read a second time upon this day six months. He said, that though he did not wish unnecessarily to deal with the rights of the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company, he moved the rejection of the Bill upon good and substantial grounds, and he moved it on behalf of the riparian owners, to whom an injustice was being done by the Bill. He had thought it his duty to move the rejection of the Second Reading rather than wait until the Bill went before the Committee, and he thus took the first opportunity in his power of explaining to the House the operation of the Bill of which he complained. He would like to call the attention of the House to what was involved in this controversy. The River Rede was a small river about 25 miles long, and the point at which the Company joined was about 16 miles from the junction of the River Tyne. The body of riparian owners were small, and that fact was his justification for moving the rejection of this Bill. They were not a strong body of owners; they had not organised their opposition, and for that reason their opposition had not been fairly put before the Committee when the Bill was considered by the Committee of the House of Lords. On the other hand, they had a powerful private Water Company or Corporation working to supply water as a private trading Company with the object of putting a dividend into the pockets of their shareholders. The Company had a capital of no less than £1,277,000, the shares in which were fully paid up. There was a 4 per cent. Debenture Stock, a 5 per cent. Preference Stock, an Ordinary and a Deferred Stock, and this Company for a long series of years had paid 8 per cent. upon their Ordinary and 5 per cent. upon their Deferred Stock. As he did not wish to take up the time of the House longer than he could help, he would not enter into details more than he was obliged; but he desired to show, as he thought he could show, that the Bill in its present form was establishing a most important and dangerous precedent in upsetting a right at Common Law that had existed for the past 50 years. He would just point out how this was done. This was not the first Act this Company had asked for, for they obtained an Act called the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Act in 1889 which authorised a reservoir upon the same site on which the present Bill sought to construct it. Under the Bill of 1889 there was to be a dam of no less than 15 feet high in which there was to be a fish-bath, as the River Rede was a river in which a great many salmon were killed every year, and being a salmon river the rights of the riparian owners were very important. He was trustee to a lady who was one of the riparian owners, but she and the other riparian owners did not fight this particular Bill because the dam to be constructed was only 15 feet high, and the fish-bath to be constructed was to be so constructed that it would not interfere with the salmon getting up the river. In addition to that, the Bill of 1889 contained a short clause, which was so important that he would venture to read it to the House. It was as follows:—

> "Provided that the owners and occupiers and all other persons interested in or injuriously affected by the taking of water by the Company from the River Rede shall, unless otherwise agreed, be entitled to claim and receive compensation in money for any loss, damage, or injury sustained by them, according to the provisions of the 6th section of the Lands Clauses Act, 1847."

Here power was given to the riparian owners, in case subsequent damage was proved, to go to a Court of Law, and if they could prove damage to claim and obtain money compensation. This Bill, however, proposed to take away that power, and that was the point he wished to bring prominently before the House. It was in consequence of that clause being included in the Act of 1889 that the riparian owners at that time did not oppose the Bill when it was before Parliament. Though the owners were not then satisfied with the water compensation, they were satisfied with the power given them of taking their case to the Court, and, if subsequent damage was proved, of obtaining money compensation. But what did the present Bill propose? In the first place, instead of the 15 feet it proposed to erect a dam 77 feet high, or five times the height of the dam proposed under the Act of 1889. Anyone interested in the matter and reading the evidence given before the Committee would see there was not the least necessity, either so far as the water went or the requirements of the district were concerned, for a dam of that description. If such a dam were constructed the result would be that the valuable water rights of the riparian owners would be absolutely destroyed. He ought to state that the Company had agreed to give a sum of £3,850 to the Tyne Fishery Conservancy, and with regard to that he would like to point out that the riparian owners would not necessarily get one penny of that money. The money would be spent, and he admitted it would be properly spent on the north side of the river, and there was no provision for compensating the riparian owners. But the crowning injustice of all was, by Clause 14, Section 9, to take from the riparian owners the power of going to a Court of Law and asking for money compensation if subsequent injury were inflicted upon them. He submitted this House was not the proper tribunal to assess money compensation, and he also submitted that a Parliamentary Committee was not the proper tribunal to assess money compensation, but the proper tribunal was the tribunal that had always hitherto existed — namely, a Court of Law to which every person who felt himself injured could go. The other matters were very small, but this was the grievance that had led him to take up the time of the House, and he trusted the House would pause before they allowed this injustice to be justified. No harm could be done to anyone by allowing the clause to remain, because it was obvious that the riparian owners would not bring any action unless they had good grounds to go upon; therefore he asked that the clause be reinserted in the Bill, and because it was not he moved the rejection of the Bill. There were other details, but he would not trouble the House with them; but there was one point, that with respect to the compensation water, which he was bound to mention——

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I rise, Sir, to a point of Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the hon. Member can move the rejection of this Bill? As I understand, the hon. Member is a trustee himself for one of the riparian owners; in the proceedings he has appeared before the House of Lords as a petitioner, and he is now asking this House to insert a clause in a matter in which he is clearly an interested person. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether an hon. Member, who is himself interested in legislation, no matter how remote, is in a position to make the Motion he has made?

*Mr. SPEAKER: No matter how closely an hon. Member may be interested in a Bill he may try to persuade the House to his own way of thinking, but whether it is possible for him to vote is another matter.

Lord R. CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Even if he receives no pay and holds purely an honorary office?

*Mr. SPEAKER: But I say it is quite competent for an hon. Member, however interested he may be, to move the rejection of a Bill which he thinks militates against his interest, however particular or close that interest may be.

Mr. SETON-KARR said, he would resume his argument after the somewhat extraordinary and unnecessary interruption. He stated he was trustee to one of the riparian owners, and he was glad to say so again, and no doubt, so far as his trusteeship went, he was an interested party; but he had yet to learn the House was prepared to sanction any legislation that would prevent any body of persons from seeking the just and lawful remedies of a Court of Law. He desired to refer, only for a moment, to the compensation water which this Bill provided, and which was not adequate. The Rede was a small salmon river, and a dam of 77 feet high would destroy the value of the river. They did not ask for any compensation now; all they said was that the Bill should be allowed to pass in such a form that, in the event of any damage being done hereafter, the riparian owners should be able to go to the Court to prove their case. That was the precedent that had been established, and which was in the Act of 1889, and what they asked was that it should be included in the present Bill. It was shown that the water compensation would not be sufficiently adequate, but the water and money compensation had always been kept distinct. He had done his duty in moving the rejection of the Bill, and he trusted the House would hesitate before taking away a legal right that had existed for 50 years, and which, on the whole, had operated with justice. He would only say, in conclusion, that the riparian owners might be a small and insignificant body of persons, but in these days of agricultural depression their riparian rights were of very considerable value. When the Water Company could pay 8 or 9 per cent. in dividends, it made it all the more evident that they were depriving the riparian owners of most important rights.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and, at the end of the Question, to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Seton-Karr.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I rise, in the interests of the time of this House, to protest against the proceeding of the hon. Member opposite. Let us see what it is. The hon. Member, as I understand, represents certain private interests which have been fully heard upon Petition in the House of Lords——

**Mr. SETON-KARR**: I do not admit that those interests were fully heard.

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: At all events the Bill was before the Committee for six days, and the proper and legitimate course is that a Bill of this kind should be heard and dealt with by a Committee of this House. It happens, no doubt, sometimes that large public interests, such as those which arose on the Thames Conservancy the other day, are at stake, and all these will be considered in a Private Bill for which there is an exceptional procedure. But what is to happen to the time of this House and its business if every individual petitioner who thinks his case has not been heard sufficiently in six days before a Committee of the House of Lords, is to be at liberty to come and raise a Debate here for the purpose of rejecting a Bill upon the Second Reading. And upon what sort of allegation? That the House of Lords, of all bodies in the world, has been regardless of private interests as regards property, and that it has violated all established rules which secure those rights of property; and upon an allegation of that sort we are to waste the time of this House in the manner proposed by the hon. Member. Though it has been ruled by you, Sir, that the hon. Member is entitled to make this Motion I think this House is entitled immediately to dispose of it, and the hon. Member having made that statement, and the House being in possession of that statement, I hope no further time will be occupied but a vote of the House at once taken.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** (Paddington, S.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman complained that Private Bills were discussed in this House. He had never known a Session when there had been so many Private Bills on Government nights. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that for several years after he (Lord R. Churchill) entered Parliament Private Bills never came on upon Government nights.

An hon. **Member**: They are all Government nights now.

**Lord R. CHURCHILL** said that of late years a good many Private Bills had come on on Government nights, and so, to this extent, Government business was interfered with. He thought the sooner they reverted to the old practice of not taking Private Bills on Government nights the better it would be for Government business.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE** (Northumberland, Tyneside) said, he would not detain the House for more than a moment or two, but this question of the supply of water was one of life and death practically to his constituents and about 400,000 inhabitants round the City of Newcastle and Gateshead. The hon. Member had stated that there was no necessity for this increased supply. As a matter of fact, during the drought of last summer, from the month of September in last year to the month of February in this——

**Mr. SETON-KARR**: It was an exceptional year.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE** admitted it was an exceptional year, but during those six months the consumption of water had to be stopped by one-half, and every householder had his supply cut off after 6 o'clock every evening.

**Mr. FREEMAN-MITFORD** (Warwick, Stratford): Because the Company had not availed themselves of the powers they acquired in 1889.

**Mr. J. A. PEASE** said, that the reason was because the Company found that the powers they acquired in 1889 were not sufficient, and therefore they asked for these further powers, which were an absolute necessity for the health and life of the community in that district. The hon. Member had endeavoured to raise a feeling against the Tyne Water

Company, but for 40 years that Company had paid on an average not more than 5 per cent., and it charged a less price, he should think, than any Corporation which supplied water—namely, only 4½d. per 1,000 gallons. On these grounds certainly it was not right that the hon. Member should try and obstruct this Bill. He agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that all these objections which had been raised could be met, and had been met. Those whom the hon. Member represented in this matter were the only individuals who went before the Lords Committee who were not fully satisfied as to the way their objections had been met, and to raise this matter now during the passage of the Bill between the Committee of the House of Lords and the House of Commons seemed to be an absolutely unjustifiable waste of time.

Mr. FREEMAN-MITFORD desired to say that the riparian owners had no desire whatever to begrudge the water to this Company; all they desired being that fair compensation should be awarded.

Mr. SETON-KARR: May I say a word or two ["No!"] in asking leave to withdraw the Motion? ["No!"] The Chancellor of the Exchequer has asked me to withdraw my Motion.

Sir W. HARCOURT: No; I asked the House to negative it.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is only entitled to speak if he wishes to withdraw the Motion. He is not entitled to speak again on the Motion.

Mr. SETON-KARR: Then I will withdraw. [*Cries of* "No!"]

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### DOG LICENCES IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been drawn to a case tried before the Justice of the Peace Court at Tain, on the 3rd instant, Captain Monro of Allen (a J.P. recently appointed on the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant for Ross and Cromarty, and Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland), and Baillie Munro (a J.P. for the Burgh of Tain), being on the Bench, in which a crofter was convicted of having in his possession on the 8th of January last a dog for which he had no licence, and, for this offence, was sentenced to pay a fine of 25s., or, in default of payment, to go to prison for one month; and whether, in view of the fact that the sentence was passed after only eight days of the licensing year (beginning the 1st of January) had elapsed, he can take steps towards a remission of the sentence in this case?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.): The Commissioners of Inland Revenue have, at my request, considered the case referred to by my hon. Friend. They cannot remit the whole fine, but, in the special circumstances, they find themselves able to mitigate it to 7s. 6d.

### TITHES IN ESSEX.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the figures given in the Report of Mr. Hunter Pringle as to tithes in Essex are accurate, which show that in that county the tithe under all kinds of crop and fallow and grass is 6s. per acre, giving a rate of 6s. 4½d. per inhabitant, whilst in Lancashire it is 1s. 9¼d. per acre, and 4½d. per inhabitant?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am not prepared to say that the figures cited by my hon. Friend accurately express the difference between the charge for commuted tithe upon titheable lands in the two counties named, and, indeed, any precise estimate of that difference would be attended with considerable difficulty. But it is, of course, true that the proportions borne by the charge for tithe to the acreage under cultivation and to the number of inhabitants vary very materially according to the agricultural and industrial conditions of the counties compared.

## EQUIPMENT OF HAULBOWLINE DOCKYARD.

**CAPTAIN DONELAN** (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that several requirements are still necessary to enable repairs to armour-clad ships to be carried out at Haulbowline Dockyard, such as steam cranes for the basin and dry dock, armour-plating shop with planing and drilling machines, boiler shop, and galvanizing tank; and that no shed has yet been erected to protect the shearing and plate-banding machines; and whether, in view of the promise of the Admiralty to make Haulbowline an efficient repairing yard, these requirements will be supplied forthwith?

**THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY** (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): It is not considered necessary that the machinery and shop mentioned in the question should be provided; but provision has been made to supply during the current year such machinery and furnaces as will, in the opinion of the Admiralty, render Haulbowline efficient to the required extent. The shed referred to will be erected during the current year.

## TITHE REDEMPTION AT RHYL.

**MR. S. SMITH** (Flintshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Board of Agriculture have issued an Order for the redemption of the tithes on property situate on the west side of High Street, in Rhyl; and whether, in such case, the owners of property there which has not hitherto paid tithe are liable to contribute towards the fund for redemption?

**MR. H. GARDNER**: An Order for the redemption of the tithe rentcharge, with which the property referred to was chargeable, was made on the 7th of March, 1893, under Section 5 of the Tithe Act, 1878, which provides for compulsory redemption where the land is divided into such numerous plots as to render it impossible for any further apportionment of the rentcharge to be conveniently made. The fact that although the owners of portions of the property chargeable have not hitherto been called upon to contribute their quota of the rentcharge would not affect their liability to pay their proper share of the redemption money.

## THE PROHIBITION OF MEETING AT KILFENORA, CO. CLARE.

**MR. W. REDMOND** (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland upon what authority and for what reason a meeting for the purpose of establishing a branch of the Irish National League at Kilfenora, County Clare, was dispersed by the police on Sunday last; whether he is aware that this meeting was one of a series called by placard for the distinct purpose of establishing the National League; and, if so, whether the meeting was a legal one; whether any notice was given by the police before the day that the meeting would not be allowed; and whether, if another meeting be called in Kilfenora to establish the League, the police will be ordered to again interfere?

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND** (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed that the placards convening the meeting at Ballykeale, near Kilfenora, on Sunday, the 20th instant, were not posted up in the locality until the morning of that date. These placards were to the effect stated in the question, and did not disclose any illegal object. The decision to prevent the meeting at Ballykeale was arrived at, however, on the night of the 19th instant, and before the appearance of the placards, and because it was believed that one of the purposes for which it was about to be held was the denunciation and intimidation of the occupants of an evicted farm at Ballykeale. The decision of the Local Authorities in this matter was supported by a notice in the public Press, which stated that the object of the meeting was to denounce a case of land-grabbing in the locality. The County Inspector states that it was late on the night of the 19th instant that he saw the announcement in the newspaper, and that he could not therefore give notice to the promoters of the meeting until the following morning, which was done.

**MR. W. REDMOND**: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to state the name of the paper in which he saw the announcement?

**MR. J. MORLEY**: I have it not in my mind just now.

**MR. W. REDMOND**: Having regard to the statement of Mr. Patrick O'Brien, who was the principal speaker at the meeting, that he was not aware of any land-grabbing in the neighbourhood and that he wished to attend the meeting in order to establish a branch of the National League, will the right hon. Gentleman allow a meeting to be held for the purpose of establishing a branch of the League ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : There has been no interference with meetings held for the purpose of establishing branches of the National League or any other body since August, 1892.

Mr. W. REDMOND : If I call a meeting of my constituents for the purpose of establishing a branch of the National League and discussing the position of the Government will the right hon. Gentleman order it to be dispersed ?

[No answer was given.]

### ORDNANCE STORES AT MALTA AND GIBRALTAR.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Ormskirk) : I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if any, and what, steps have been taken for the separation of custody, storeage, and accounts of Naval from War Office Ordnance Stores at Malta and Gibraltar, so as to secure the direct responsibility of each Service for the adequacy of quantity and readiness for use of its own stores ?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON : The storage and accounts of Naval Ordnance Stores at these two Stations have been separated, and the Admiralty conducts the examination of the accounts. The question of separate custody is under the consideration of the Naval Warlike Stores Committee, and a Report on the subject is shortly expected. The Admiralty accept the responsibility for both the adequacy and the readiness of Naval Ordnance Stores.

### CORDITE AND THE LEE-METFORD RIFLE.

Mr. WEIR : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state whether any experiments have been made with the object of comparing the results of firing cartridges made up of cordite and black powder respectively on the barrel of the Lee-Metford magazine rifle ?

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell - Bannerman, Stirling, &c.) : As I informed the hon. Member on May 12, 1893, no experiments have been made with the direct object of comparing the results of firing cartridges made up of cordite and black powder respectively on the barrel of the Lee-Metford rifle. Nor are such experiments considered to be necessary, inasmuch as the preference for cordite is founded upon other considerations than the comparative wear of the barrel ; and it is known that the advantages of the use of cordite involve a shorter life of the barrel.

### DANGEROUS PERFORMANCES IN LONDON MUSIC HALLS.

Mr. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he is aware that Miss Julie Manard was struck in the neck by a bullet whilst being shot at during a public entertainment at the Canterbury Music Hall on Saturday evening last, 26th instant, and was subsequently removed to St. Thomas's Hospital ; and whether he will take steps to put a stop to such dangerous performances ?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.) : My attention had not previously been called to this matter, but I am having inquiry made into the circumstances.

### PENSION REGULATIONS.—A HARD CASE.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can recommend a grant to the widow of the late Sergeant-Major Lowe, Army Service Corps, who committed suicide after a service of 28 years, 14 of which were spent in India, where, it is presumed, he contracted brain disease ; and whether, in view of the fact that in one month more the widow would have been entitled to a pension, an exception will be made in this case ?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : I regret that I am precluded by Regulations from making an exception in this case.

Mr. FIELD : May I point out that this is a very exceptional case, and one of great hardship ?

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: I quite admit the hardship of the case, but it is impossible to make an exception.

### CO-OPERATIVE FARMING IN IRELAND.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will facilitate the labourers, now in many parts of Ireland bordering on starvation, to acquire land for co-operative farming; whether he is aware the land of Ireland is only partly cultivated, thereby causing national loss; and whether he will consider the advisability of raising such a sum, upon security similar to that given for other advances, as will enable a loan of about £60,000 to be made to the labourers in each of the 32 counties in Ireland?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: There is no statutable power to make loans to acquire land for the purpose of co-operative farming; and without expressing an opinion one way or the other in regard to such a scheme, I can only say that at the present time it would be impossible to consider legislation on the subject.

### VACANCIES IN THE DUBLIN TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he will explain why, in the Telegraph Department, in filling two vacancies in the Assistant Superintendentships of the second class from the class of clerks, two juniors were promoted over four seniors of the same class, one of the latter at the time of appointment having for years performed in turn the duties of Assistant Superintendent with satisfaction to his superior officer; whether he now becomes disqualified for the position of Assistant Second Class Superintendent, after performing its duties for years without remuneration; why, in filling up a vacancy for a first-class clerkship, three qualified men were passed over; and why, in filling up four vacancies in the first class telegraphists from the second class, men, with service from 20 to 30 years, were passed with only eight years' service?

**The POSTMASTER GENERAL** (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): I am unable to identify the office to which the hon. Member refers. If he will let me know what office it is, I will have inquiry made, and give him all the information I can.

### SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY.

**Sir F. MAPPIN** (York, W.R., Hallamshire): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he will lay the Directory of the Department of Science and Art upon the Table of the House of Commons, in the same way as the Education Code is submitted?

***The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL** (Mr. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): The Education Code is laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament in accordance with Section 97 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. The Science and Art Directory is also always laid on the Table, though there is no statutory obligation to do so.

### ALLEGED LARCENIES BY POLICE ON THE DE FREYNE ESTATE.

**Mr. HAYDEN** (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Police Report upon which he grounds his refusal to grant compensation to the tenant upon the De Freyne estate, from whom certain goods were taken by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary; whether the refusal is chiefly based upon the inability of the parties to identify the actual individuals by whom the property was taken; whether he will take into consideration the difficulty of such identification where most of those engaged on the eviction were strangers; and whether he will reconsider his decision if affidavits on the subject are placed before him?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: It would be contrary to precedent to lay upon the Table the Report referred to in the first paragraph of the hon. and learned Gentleman's question. The charges preferred against the police were that they had burned the turf belonging to some of the evicted tenants on this estate, and used the hay and straw of others for bedding. The District Inspector inquired into the matter in November last, and two of the women who made charges — namely, Bridget and Mary Moran—acquitted the police of having stolen their turf, hay, and straw. These women, moreover, signed a statement to this effect which was taken down by the District Inspector. On November 11 the police gave to Mary Moran some turf as an equivalent for what she had given them. They gave her a quantity, if anything, somewhat more than she had given them, which she was reluctant to receive. A third woman—Anne Moran—also signed a statement that she made no charge of larceny against the police. A further charge of larceny was preferred by another woman—Mrs. Cahilan—but this on being investigated was also disproved. The Report which has been made by the Divisional Commissioner in this matter, after a careful investigation on the spot, satisfies me that there is no foundation for the charges brought against the police; if, however, the hon. Gentleman has any fresh evidence to adduce in support of these charges, I shall cause further inquiry to be made.

### IRISH POOR LAW UNION FINANCE.

**Mr. ROSS** (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when he will be in a position to give the Return which he has promised of the Irish Poor Law Unions which are in a state of financial embarrassment?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Local Government Board promise to let me have within the next few days the information which I have called for in this matter. I shall then be in a position to judge how far the Return can be granted.

### RETURNING OFFICERS' CHARGES AT THE GENERAL ELECTION.

**Sir H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON** (Stafford, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will arrange for a Return to be made to the House of Commons, showing in detail the Returning Officers' Charges in all Parliamentary elections at the last General Election in 1892?

**The SECRETARY to the TREASURY** (Sir J. T. Hibbert, Oldham): Full information appears to be already available in the Parliamentary Return No. 423 of 1893, presented at the instance of the hon. Member for the Mansfield Division of Nottinghamshire.

***Sir H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON**: The Return which I hold in my hand is the one referred to. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is aware that it is not in sufficient detail to supply the information I want, and that it is so full of discrepancies as to be practically of no value?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: I am not aware of the discrepancies.

**Sir H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON**: I should like to have such a Return as is supplied to Members or their agents immediately after the election.

***Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: If the hon. Baronet moves for a Return, the matter shall be considered.

### IRISH ASYLUM BOARDS.

**Mr. J. HAMMOND** (Carlow): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Executive Government have frequently allowed Chairmen of Asylum Boards to give what is known as a casting vote; whether they have done so recently in the case of the Limerick Asylum Board, although they had disallowed such vote in any case previously to the present month; whether they had been advised during the present month that such vote should be sanctioned by statute or other competent authority in order that it be valid; and whether the fact that the custom has prevailed so long can be regarded as sufficient authority to justify the Chairman of the Carlow Asylum Board in giving a casting vote on the occasion of the election of a medical assistant in the last month; and, if not, will he take any steps to make such casting vote of the Chairman legal?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: I understand that on occasions casting votes have been given by Chairmen of Asylum Boards, apparently acting on the belief that such power was vested in them. At the recent meeting of the Carlow Asylum Board the Chairman seems to have acted also under this belief. The legal power of giving a casting vote appears to have been, for the first time, questioned on the last-mentioned occasion, when the Government were advised that the power did not exist.

**Mr. J. HAMMOND**: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to make such a custom on the part of the Chairman legal?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: That requires consideration.

## EXTRA POSTAGE CHARGES IN LONDON.

**Mr. HENNIKER HEATON** (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Postmaster General under what Act, or section of an Act, does he levy a charge of a halfpenny extra postage on letters posted in London on Sundays; whether he has the power to charge any extra postage up to 1s. on every letter; and whether he can see his way to remit this charge?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: The charge of ½d. extra postage on letters posted in London on Sundays for despatch in the evening mails of that day is not made under any statutory Act. The arrangement is one made by the Postmaster General to meet the convenience of those who desire this accommodation, which in itself puts the Department to some expense. I am not prepared to withdraw the charge, as any large increase in the number of letters posted for the evening mail despatched on Sunday would increase materially Sunday work. The extra postage of 1s. referred to I presume is that made on registered letters posted up to the latest minute at the General Post Office mentioned on page 306 of the *Post Office Guide*. It is absolutely necessary that the charge should be sufficiently high to prevent a large number of registered letters being posted at a very late hour.

## PLEURO-PNEUMONIA IN CANADIAN CATTLE.

**Dr. FARQUHARSON** (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will adopt the suggestion of Professor Adami, of M'Gill College, Montreal, and cause careful bacteriological observations to be made on such cases of suspicious lung disease as may be detected in cattle landed from Canada, so as to clear up the difficult points of diagnosis which are admitted to exist between the earlier stages of contagious and non-contagious pleuro-pneumonia?

**Mr. H. GARDNER**: So far as I can gather from the inquiries I have made, bacteriological observations have not hitherto been productive of any valuable results in the case of pleuro-pneumonia, no specific germ having been identified as being invariably associated with that disease. I shall be glad, however, to confer with my hon. Friend on the subject, and to give the fullest consideration to any suggestions he may be in a position to make.

## FOUL AIR ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILWAY.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will state the result of the correspondence with the Metropolitan Railway Company, in reference to the foul atmosphere in the Underground Railway tunnels between Baker Street and King's Cross Stations?

**The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE** (Mr. Burt, Morpeth): The Board of Trade have received a letter from the Secretary to the Company promising that the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Directors at their next meeting.

## BOILER EXPLOSIONS IN LONDON.

**Mr. WEIR**: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade the number of persons killed last winter owing to kitchen boiler explosions in London; and whether it is proposed to take steps to prevent such accidents in future?

**Mr. BURT**: The Board of Trade have no information as to the number of persons killed last winter owing to kitchen boiler explosions in London. The powers of the Department under the Boiler Explosions Act do not extend to boilers used exclusively for domestic purposes.

**Mr. WEIR**: Can the hon. Gentleman state the number of accidents from these explosions?

**Mr. BURT**: No, Sir; I have no information.

## IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOANS.

**Mr. TULLY** (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state how many applications for loans, under "The Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Amendment Act, 1883," have been received from bodies of Town Commissioners in the Counties of Roscommon and Tipperary; what sum has been advanced to the Roscommon Town Commissioners under this Act; whether it will be possible for the Roscommon Town Commissioners to apply for fresh loans under the Act; and whether he can state what are the reasons which caused the Board of Works to refuse the applications of the Boyle Town Commissioners for loans under this Act?

**Sir J. T. HIBBERT**: No information has reached me from the Board of Works upon this question; but I may point out that the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund was transferred under Section 35 (5) of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, to the Congested Districts Board. Any question as to the administration of the Fund by that Board should be addressed to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.

### GERMAN SPIRITS AND IRISH WHISKY.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that German spirit is conveyed in large quantities from Belfast and elsewhere to Bristol, where it is converted into so-called Irish whisky and put into Irish whisky casks previously shipped for this purpose as empties from Glasgow and Greenock, and then re-shipped from Bristol to Belfast and other places in Ireland as real Irish whisky; and whether, in the interests of native manufacturers and consumers generally, an inquiry will be instituted respecting the manipulation and sale of this foreign mixture sold as Irish whisky?

**The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER** (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I must apologise to the hon. Gentleman for the delay in obtaining this information, but I am not yet in a position to answer the question.

**Mr. FIELD**: Am I to understand that the right hon. Gentleman is pursuing inquiries with respect to this matter, because I do not intend to allow it to pass away?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I am pursuing inquiries, but the inquiries have not yet overtaken me. I have pressed for information, and I will take care that the matter is not overlooked.

**Mr. FIELD**: I may remind the right hon. Gentleman that this is the third time the question has appeared on the Paper.

### RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

**Sir J. WHITEHEAD** (Leicester): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, looking to the fact that there are thousands of accounts between traders and the Railway Companies waiting settlement, to the detriment of the commercial community, until the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill has become law, he will give special facilities for the Second Reading of the Bill; and whether he can now definitely fix a day for the purpose?

**Mr. CHANNING** (Northampton, E.): At the same time, I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the Notices on the Paper on the Second Reading of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill are intended to secure a short discussion in the House on the scope of the Bill, and not to defeat the Bill; and whether he will consider the advisability of taking the Bill after 11 o'clock at an early date?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I am not in a position to answer these questions at present.

### DEBATES ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

**Mr. A. C. MORTON**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would arrange to have some payment on account of Indian Charges placed on the Estimates (as is done in the case of the Metropolitan Police Accounts), so that an opportunity might be given for the consideration of all questions appertaining to the welfare of our fellow-subjects in India?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: No; I do not think it will be possible to make an arrangement of the kind suggested.

### POLITICAL PENSIONS.

**Mr. A. C. MORTON**: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government will consider the advisability of not filling up the vacancy under "The Political Pensions Act, 1869," caused by the death of Lord Emlyn, until this House has had an opportunity of expressing an opinion with regard to the repeal of that Act of Parliament?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: No appointment has been made, but I am not in a position to give my hon. Friend the pledge for which he asks.

### EXAMINATIONS FOR THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

**Mr. PAUL** (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the assurances given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian on 8th and 15th of June last, when effect will be given to the Resolution passed by this House on the 2nd of June directing that all open competitive examinations for the Civil Service of India shall henceforth be held simultaneously both in India and England?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said: The Resolution of the House directing that all competitive examinations for the Civil Service of India shall henceforth be held simultaneously both in England and India has been most carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government after consultation with the Government of India, and Papers on the subject have been laid on the Table of the House. The Despatch from the Secretary of State to the Governor General, dated April 19, 1894, states that Her Majesty's Government are most anxious that the natives of India should enjoy every facility, compatible with the maintenance of the efficiency of the administration and the safety of British rule, to enter the Public Service, and that they have reconsidered the whole subject with a sincere desire to give full weight to the arguments in favour of a system of simultaneous examinations; but they have arrived at the conclusion that there are insuperable objections to the establishment of that system, and that by far the best method of meeting the legitimate claims and aspirations of the natives of the country is to bestow such of the higher posts as can be made available for them on those who distinguish themselves by their capacity and trustworthiness in the performance of subordinate duties; and that upon a careful review of the whole question Her Majesty's Government agree with the Government of India that the system lately established is based on just and wise principles, and are of opinion that, subject to such alterations in detail as experience may prove to be necessary, it should be maintained.

MR. PAUL: I intend to call attention to the subject on an early opportunity.

MR. CAINE (Bradford, E.): Is it the intention of the Government to take any action to rescind the Resolution passed by the House?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: No, Sir; it is not.

## PORTMAHOMACK HARBOUR.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if, in view of the fact that the Fishery Board a year ago reported that Portmahomack Harbour required improvement in the interests of the fishermen, that the Fishery Board had no funds at its disposal at the time for the purpose of carrying out such improvements, that solely in consequence of the condition of the harbour the shipment of herrings had declined from 17,317 barrels yearly during the five years ending 1867 to 3,439 barrels yearly during the five years ending 1892, he will state whether the Fishery Board is now in possession of funds to carry out the necessary improvements; and, if not, will steps be taken to make provision for the requisite amount before the trade of Portmahomack is utterly ruined?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am sorry to say that the Fishery Board have no funds available for the improvement of the harbour of Portmahomack. Harbours are required at many points along the coast, and the claims of this village are not so urgent as that of several others. The new harbour of Balintore, only a few miles distant, to some extent takes the place of that at Portmahomack, serving as a port for the surrounding country.

## PAUPER LUNATICS IN IRELAND.

MR. SHIRESS WILL (Montrose, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that in August, 1892, a licensed publican in Arbroath was placed in the Sunnyside Lunatic Asylum, Montrose, and has since then and down to the present time been there maintained as a pauper lunatic out of the poor rates of the parish of St. Vigeans, Arbroath, at a cost to the ratepayers of 11s. a week; that some months ago the licence was transferred by the Licensing Authority to the wife of the person referred to, or to someone else on his behalf; and that the trade is still being carried on, and his name still appears on the licensed premises; and whether the payments so made out of the poor rates are a legal expenditure in the administration of the Poor Law in Scotland?

SIR G. TREVELYAN: I believe the facts to be as stated in the question.

I am informed that the man, when committed to the asylum, was insolvent, and that his wife, who now holds the licence and carries on the business, is barely able to maintain herself and children. The man is chargeable as a pauper solely because there is no other means available for his maintenance. I am advised by the Board of Supervision that there does not appear to be any illegal application of the parochial funds.

### SENTENCES FOR CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will inquire into a case which came before the Brentford Bench on the 10th of May, in which George Ball was sentenced to a month's imprisonment with hard labour for leading a horse which was unfit to travel at Southall; whether he is aware that the evidence showed that Ball had nothing to do with the horse, and was not aware that it was in so bad a state, but, being out of work, had been asked by its owner to lead it to Southall Market, and was paid 1s. for doing so; whether he is aware that Sir George Measom, the Chairman of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, was one of the two Magistrates who convicted and sentenced Ball; whether it is regular for the Chairman of such a Society to adjudicate upon such cases, even although he may give the accused an opportunity of objecting to his sitting; and whether, upon that ground, or upon the ground of the severity of the sentence, he will reduce the term of Ball's imprisonment?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have carefully considered this case, with the result that I at once ordered the man's discharge, and he was released on Saturday afternoon.

### SCOTCH MAGISTRATES AND LICENSING QUESTIONS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether Captain Monro, of Allan, Ross-shire, who is Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland and a Justice of the Peace, recently appointed on the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant of Ross and Cromarty, is entitled to sit as a Justice of the Peace, seeing he holds a Government office and has control over the police, who, in the majority of cases falling under the jurisdiction of Justices of the Peace, are witnesses for the prosecution; whether he is aware that Captain Monro sat at a Licensing Court at Tain, on the 17th of April last, and was chairman of the meeting; and that he took statements from the police at Portmahomack and Chief Constable of Ross and Cromarty derogatory to an applicant for a licence, without allowing the applicant an opportunity of disproving the statements so made; whether Captain Monro voted against said applicant on that occasion; and that, on appeal to the Quarter Sessions, at Dingwall, went there and also voted against the applicant; and whether, seeing that Captain Monro is Inspector of Constabulary, he is entitled to sit as a Justice of the Peace on cases where penalties are incurred under the Excise and other Acts, in many cases of which police officers are the chief witnesses for the prosecution?

Sir G. TREVELYAN: The facts appear to be as stated in the question, except that I am informed that the applicant was in Court and was also represented at the Bar. A Justice of the Peace is not disentitled to sit in cases where penalties are incurred under the Excise Acts because he is Inspector of Constabulary.

### DUES IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.

Mr. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it has been brought to his notice that a result of the Notification issued by the British Government to the Powers on the 22nd of June, 1892, to the effect that the Sultan of Zanzibar had withdrawn the reserves under which, on the advice of Great Britain and Germany, he originally gave his adhesion to the Berlin Act, has been to prevent the further collection of the Tariff Duties on produce reaching the coast from countries in the interior and laying outside the limits of the British Protectorate of Zanzibar; whether free transit may now be claimed through the Sultan's dominions for goods imported at the coast if declared as in transit for countries in the interior, thus passing free of payment of the 5 per cent. Import Duty at time of landing to which all goods landed are liable under the Commercial Treaties irrespective of their ultimate destination; whether the above charges, if such have taken place, are consequent upon and are authorised by the Berlin

Act; and whether the Imperial British East Africa Company, administering the coast under concession from the Sultan of Zanzibar, have protested against the loss of revenue so caused to them, and asked Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to intervene in the manner specified in the Charter; and, if so, what answer has been given?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): No such change as is indicated resulted directly from the notification of the adhesion of the Sultan to the free zone system of the Act of Berlin, as at the time of adhesion the East Africa Company administered the coast and the interior and had only spoken of possible retirement from Uganda. The free transit provisions of the Act have been gradually brought into effect by the successive spontaneous acts of the Company in withdrawing from the districts of the interior which it had undertaken to administer. Free transit to the districts abandoned by it may now be claimed under the Berlin Act. The Company has protested, and its protest has been noted, but in the present position of the question the Secretary of State has not intervened.

## MEDICAL ATTENDANCE FOR THE SMALL ISLES, INVERNESS-SHIRE.

**DR. MACGREGOR** (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he received communications pointing out that in the parish of Small Isles, Inverness-shire, with a population of 443, there is neither a resident doctor nor a midwife; that the nearest doctor lives eight miles from Eigg, across what is often a stormy sea; that lying-in women are exposed to great danger for want of proper attention; and that the infants are not infrequently born dead in the absence of timely aid; and what steps does he propose to take to remedy this state of things?

**SIR G. TREVELYAN**: My attention has been directed to the fact that there is no resident doctor or nurse in this parish, a state of matters which I regret to say is not exceptional in these outlying districts. With regard to the mortality in the parish, I am informed that last year six persons died in the Island of Canna, the youngest being 72 and the eldest 95 years of age; that there were no deaths in Rum or Muck, and eight in Eigg, including three infants, none of which were born dead. There are no Government funds from which any special assistance can be given, as the grant for medical relief is for the benefit only of the pauper population, and the Board of Supervision would not be justified in treating one parish more favourably than another. I understand, however, that a meeting was held at Eigg on the 9th instant at which a committee was appointed, with a view to the levy of a voluntary tax to attract a resident doctor to the parish, and I trust that this scheme will be successfully realised.

**DR. MACGREGOR**: Seeing that the people have agreed to levy a tax upon themselves, and that the population is a very poor one, cannot the right hon. Gentleman give them assistance out of some fund?

**SIR G. TREVELYAN**: I am sorry that no such fund exists either in England or in Scotland.

**DR. MACGREGOR**: Then is this state of things to be allowed to go on?

**SIR G. TREVELYAN**: The Parochial Board has power to deal with these matters.

## EXAMINATIONS UNDER THE NEW CODE.

**MR. J. WILSON** (Lanark, Govan): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has considered that schools whose school year ends on the 31st of October should have their next annual examination in November conducted under the provisions of the New Code, seeing that the work has been carried on two-thirds of the year under the provisions of the Code 1893; and whether he has decided to compel candidate pupil teachers of 15 and 16 years of age to take the papers of the first and second years respectively, instead of allowing them as hitherto to take whatever papers they are best qualified for?

***SIR G. TREVELYAN**: I have already issued instructions to the Inspectors to make every allowance for the fact that the requirements in arithmetic have this year been slightly raised, so that no school will suffer from the work having been carried on for part of the year under the Code for 1893. I have also laid upon the Table of the House a Minute postponing for the present year the changes in regard to the examination of pupil teachers.

### CIVILIAN BOOTMAKERS IN THE ARMY.

**Mr. DODD** (Essex, S.E., Maldon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why a peremptory Order has been issued from the headquarters of the Eastern District prohibiting the employment of civilians in the capacity of master bootmakers to the Infantry; whether he is aware that there is no such Order in regard to other districts, and none in that district or elsewhere as to Cavalry or Artillery; and what civilian or civilians this puts out of employment, and how long notice he or they received, and for what length of time he or they have held such post?

**Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: By the Queen's Regulations of last year the shoemaker's shop of each battalion was directed to be placed in charge of a properly qualified non-commissioned officer. The officer commanding the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment having no properly qualified non-commissioned officer in his battalion to take charge of the shop, reported the fact to his General Officer commanding, when steps were taken to obtain a master shoemaker by transfer from another regiment, and to dispense with the services of the civilians who had been improperly employed.

### COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN DUBLIN.

**Mr. FIELD**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any Code of Regulations for carrying into effect the compulsory clauses of the Education Act of 1892 in the City of Dublin has been approved of by the Commissioners of National Education, or whether any such Code has yet been submitted by the Corporation of Dublin to the Commissioners of National Education or by the Commissioners to the Corporation; and, if so, when?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that no Code of Regulations for carrying into effect the compulsory clauses of the Education Act of 1892 has been submitted to them for approval in respect of Dublin. A sample Code of Regulations was prepared by the Commissioners and a copy was sent on November 6, 1893, to the Corporation of Dublin for consideration, as well as to the Local Authorities of all the rest of the 118 places to which the compulsory attendance clauses of the Act apply.

### EXPORTATION OF IRISH PAUPERS FROM SCOTLAND.

**Mr. DANE** (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that two paupers, named Neil M'Hugh and Michael Cairns, were, on the 18th April last, deported from Greenock and personally conducted by a removing officer, named White, to the Enniskillen Union Workhouse; is he aware that M'Hugh had spent 51 and Cairns 35 years working in Scotland, and that the former, at the time of his deportation, was suffering intense pain from a broken arm; and will he confer with the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant with a view to amending the present law which imposes upon Irish ratepayers the cost of supporting broken-down persons who have spent their lives and labour out of the country that gave them birth?

**Sir G. TREVELYAN**: I have now received the Report of the Inspector of Glasgow on the cases referred to. The men, Cairns and McCue, are aged 45 and 63 respectively; they were removed to Ireland on the date named, and in accordance with the provisions of the Statute, under warrants signed by two Justices of the Peace. Neither of them possessed a settlement in Scotland. McCue was last admitted a pauper on the 22nd of March, 1894, being then disabled by "fracture of forearm," and when removed on the 13th of April he was medically certified as fit for removal. The Board of Supervision have been anxious that some check should be imposed on the power of removing paupers both to England and Ireland, and also from parish to parish in Scotland, by granting a right of appeal; but I should deprecate the total repeal of the enactments in question.

### THE LEITRIM MAGISTRACY.

**Mr. TULLY**: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the County of Leitrim there are only 13 Roman Catholic Magistrates, and 62 of other denominations; and that since the 11th of August, 1892, there have been appointed by the Lord Chancellor four

Protestant and Tory Magistrates and only four Roman Catholics; and whether, as the population of the county contains 71,098 Roman Catholics and 7,520 of all other denominations, he can state that the Lord Chancellor will not further increase the preponderance of Protestant and Tory Magistrates on the Bench, and is prepared to appoint more Catholic Magistrates?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The relative proportions of the several religious denominations of the Magistracy in the County of Leitrim and its populations are correctly stated. The present Lord Chancellor has appointed nine Magistrates for Leitrim, of whom five are Roman Catholics, but one has neglected to take out his commission. Of the four Protestant gentlemen referred to one is an *ex officio* appointment—the Divisional Commissioner. The Lord Chancellor is now making several appointments of Magistrates for the county.

### CRIEFF POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

**Sir D. MACFARLANE** (Argyll): On behalf of the hon. Member for Canterbury, I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he is aware that in the Town of Crieff, N.B., there was, on the 23rd instant, only one delivery of letters, at 6.45 a.m., and that, though the post office remained open during the day, no letters were delivered to those who called for them between 9 a.m. on the 23rd and 8 a.m. on the 24th, a period of 23 hours; whether letters were refused to callers at other Scottish towns on the 23rd or 24th instant; and whether he will direct that in future, on such occasions, there shall be an afternoon as well as a morning delivery of letters to callers?

**Mr. A. MORLEY**: I have asked for information on this subject, and will send a reply to the hon. Member when I am in possession of the particulars.

### LUNATICS IN THE LARNE WORKHOUSE.

**Mr. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the report in *The Irish News* of the 17th instant of the proceedings at the special meeting of the Larne (County Antrim) Board of Guardians, held on the 16th instant, to consider the letter sent to the Guardians by the Secretary of the Local Government Board of Ireland; whether he is aware that, out of 61 inmates in the infirmary of the workhouse, 27 are lunatics; that the medical officer of the workhouse stated at the meeting that, of the three assistants who were helping the infirm nurse in charge at the time when the Inspector visited the house, the two who were then doing the work were regular prostitutes; and whether, considering the disclosures made at this meeting, some inquiry will be held into the working of the institution, or some steps taken to have a sufficient number of proper nurses engaged to attend to the wants of the patients?

**Mr. J. MORLEY**: The facts are as stated in the question. The Guardians at their meeting held on the 16th instant decided to appoint a probationer nurse to assist in the workhouse infirmary. They have been informed that the Local Government Board will not countenance any arrangement under which persons of immoral character are employed to act as attendants on the sick poor, and the Board have called upon them to forthwith put a stop to such a discreditable state of affairs.

### THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

**Mr. BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer consider the advisability of informing the House on Thursday—when he proposes his Resolution in regard to Government business—in what order Government Bills are to be proceeded with?

**Sir W. HARCOURT**: I must defer my answer till Thursday.

### SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Report from the Committee of Supply, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order Sittings of the House.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### FINANCE BILL.—(No. 190.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 28th May.*]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: I wish to move the insertion, in line 18, of the words "ascertained as hereinafter provided." The right hon. Gentleman yesterday hinted that the Government proposed to accept the words, and under the circumstances I need not occupy the time of the House by speaking on the Amendment.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes, we accept it.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after the word "value," to insert the words "ascertained as hereinafter provided."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Amendment agreed to.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said, he desired to propose the insertion of the words "as set forth in the Inland Revenue affidavit." He did not, he said, mean to press this Amendment, but he wished simply to put it before the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a practical suggestion for carrying out the statute, and he would like the Government to reconsider their decision on the point. There were three matters here under consideration—assimilation, graduation, and aggregation. As to assimilation, no just-minded man could deny that it was right to levy upon the principal value of succession to real estate whenever such principal value actually passed, but the matter of assimilation was relatively a very small one. He might point out that the whole of the Legacy Duty amounted roughly to £3,000,000, the Probate Duty to £6,000,000, and the Succession Duty to £1,500,000. The question of assimilation affected but a small proportion of that £1,500,000; for he ventured to repeat the assertion he made on the previous day, that in the large majority of cases in point of value the principal value of real estate did not pass but only a life interest therein. The Chancellor had denied that, but, on inquiry, he would find it was the case. Assimilation, therefore, would only affect the lesser part, the £1,500,000, and would produce little or no money. It was, therefore, relatively a small matter. But the principle of aggregation embodied in the Bill was altogether mischievous, foolish, and impracticable. The Death Duties were already complicated enough. In these discussions hon. Members were too prone to take a simple case as illustration; but the vagaries of testators were infinite, and it was the complications caused thereby which led to all the difficulties. In a case recently taken into Court it appeared that A was entitled to some money on the death of B. B was his wife, and the children C, D, and E were also interested subject to B's death. But A, C, D, and E died first, and then B died, and the result was that there were five devolutions and transmissions of personalty and five sets of legacy all arising out of one death. In another case cited in the book written by Mr. Wallace, of the Legacy Duty Office, 99 legatees' estates had to be followed out on one death, and if this absurd aggregation were adopted they would have had to be followed out not merely downwards but upwards, too, to make the aggregation of each. If there was this amount of complication under the Death Duties as they at present existed, a far greater complication would arise under the proposed scheme of taxation brought forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His proposal, however, got rid of what he conceived to be the great difficulty, the great impossibility of the Budget scheme of what were improperly called Death Duties—namely, the question of aggregation—and it would reduce the duty to a Probate Duty. He did not suggest the abandonment of the desire to tax realty, because the Legacy and the Succession Duties were left as at present. His proposal would simply get rid of aggregation; it would charge the Estate Duty on the personalty only; and if there was a wish to apply graduation and assimilation, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be perfectly free to do this by further duties either on legacies or successions, or both, and duties graduated as he might please; but the very great difficulty of aggregation embodied in the Bill would be got rid of. It was possible to graduate, and it was possible to assimilate, but not under the scheme as it at present stood. He doubted, however, whether his Amendment really effected any alteration in the Bill, for by Clause 7, Section 6, the Estate Duty was in the first instance to be calculated at the appropriate rate according to the value of the estate as set forth in the Inland Revenue affidavit. He begged formally to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after the word "value," to insert the words "as set forth in the Inland Revenue affidavit."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR W. HARCOURT said, he was glad to hear that the hon. Member had no wish to press his Amendment. There were several objections to the Amendment, one of them being that as the affidavit was the statement of the representatives of the deceased, the authorities could not accept that statement as conclusive of the amount upon which the duties ought to be levied.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR R. WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he wished to move an Amendment providing that in the case of every person dying after the commencement of this part of the Act the graduated Estate Duty shall be levied and paid upon the principal value of—

> "the benefit accruing to any person on the death of the deceased in any"

property, real or personal, settled or not settled, which passes on death. He said that he moved this Amendment with the object of raising the first of the three or four very important questions of principle which arose on this clause. He had consulted *The Times* report of the Chairman's ruling, and it confirmed his recollection that the objection of the Chairman to the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Member for the University of London was based on two grounds—namely, that it increased the Succession Duties and affected the number of persons paying. He had, however, framed this Amendment in such a way as not to offend against the ruling with regard to this matter given last Thursday. He did not propose to alter in any shape or form the number of persons who would have to pay; nor did he propose to increase the duties they would have to pay. His proposition was this—that the principle of the Bill as enunciated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that taxes of this character, and, *à fortiori*, graduated taxes, ought to be assessed and paid in proportion to the ability of the persons who paid them. There were some very important questions to be considered in connection with that clause which, to some extent, approached the fringe of the question he was about to argue, which it was necessary for him to briefly enumerate. The first was the principle of graduation. When speaking of that, however, he would not be concerned with the principle of graduation itself, but with the effect of that principle when it was applied to the scheme of taxation under the present financial Bill. Nor was he at present concerned with the question of principal value—that would have to be fully discussed when they came directly to consider that subject at a later stage in the Debate—but only as to the way in which the principal value was to be arrived at. Then there was the question of aggregation. He was not concerned with it directly, but he should have to point out that the principle entered to a certain extent into the considerations he was about to bring before the House. What he was concerned with was the proposal that the tax should be levied in proportion to a person's ability to pay. It would be seen that he was quoting, and not for the first time, the right hon. Gentleman's own language in moving the Resolution upon which the Bill was founded. He submitted that that principle was a fair one, but that the way in which it was proposed to carry out that principle in the Bill was one that would not work fairly, and therefore he had introduced this Amendment, believing that, if it were adopted, the object of the proposal would receive effect, while the injustice of the present method would be avoided. Let them think what methods of increasing the Death Duty might have been adopted, because if they approached the consideration of the question from that point of view they would see in what respect the Chancellor of the Exchequer had either abandoned one standard principle in order to accept another, or had, as they (the Opposition) thought not wisely, mixed up two or three conflicting principles and modes of application. First of all, the right hon. Gentleman might have assimilated realty and personalty. He (Sir R. Webster) would accept for the purposes of his argument the view that it was consistent with the right hon. Gentleman's plan that, to a greater or less extent, the distinction between realty and personalty should be broken down. He would assume that it was fundamental to the right hon. Gentleman's scheme that in future, for the purposes of taxation, realty and personalty should be amalgamated. He suggested that such a result could have been obtained without recourse to any new method—for example, it could have provided that all the property of deceased should have been brought into hotch-pot, and upon that an increased Probate Duty could have been levied. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, indeed, last night defined this new tax as "an analogue" to the Probate Duty. Why was it impossible for the right hon. Gentleman to do this, and to merely increase the Probate Duty? It was because he had made up his mind that he would introduce the principle of graduation. There was nothing new in it. They were told that in 1889 there was a kind of graduation applied to the Estate Duty. Certain estates below a certain figure were exempted; but it was not graduation properly so-called. Small estates paid less, not through the operation of a graduated scale, but because they were allowed a certain fixed abatement. But they all knew there was a graduation of another kind depending on the degree of relationship of the beneficiaries to the deceased which applied to the Legacy and Succession Duty. Why was it impossible for the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have adopted a simple course, and to have treated all as Probate Duty, and put an increase upon it? Because the application of Probate Duty, properly so-called, was absurd. He (Sir R. Webster) was aware that this view had been clearly foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. Could anything be more logically absurd than to say that the Probate Duty, properly so-called, should be graduated? It was as illogical as to say, if they wanted to graduate the Income Tax, that a man who had £1,000 a year should pay 6d., and the man with £20,000 a year 2s., because the bank with which the latter did business divided 50 or 60 per cent. dividend. Could anything be more absurd than to suggest that there was any justice in graduating the Probate Duty if they were going to regard merely the total amount of property that was to be divided, instead of the position in which the recipient stood? He did not wish to overlay his case with wearying examples, but he could not help giving one. Suppose a rich man chose to leave a very large sum of money to a charity and the rest of his property in very small legacies to different relations. Under the present scheme his relations would have to pay a high rate of duty, because the large sum that had been left to the charity would be amalgamated with the small sums left them and duty charged upon the whole estate. That surely would not be either fair or right. He (Sir R. Webster) need not refer to the Account Duty, which he would agree was an analogue to the Probate Duty, but he would pass on to consider what should have been done assuming that the right hon. Gentleman had determined to assimilate realty and personalty. What it seemed to him (Sir R. Webster) the right hon. Gentleman ought to have done, and what would have been the right scheme, even assuming that they accepted all the other views he (Sir R. Webster) had merely summarised with regard to the treatment of estates, would have been to assimilate the Succession Duty and the Legacy Duty, to have turned realty into personalty, taxed them all as Legacy Duty, and then have graduated the Legacy Duty. That was a principle upon which they might have had a good deal of controversy, but at any rate there would have been very much less friction, and alteration of accounts, and a far shorter Bill. This would have commended itself to those who desired to simplify and assimilate the duty. But the scheme they had before them was of a different kind. It had been well put by one of the Members for Essex the other night, who had said that it seemed to be

> "A sort of mixing up of a duty that was a duty of alienation with duties which were duties for a benefit received,"

for what purpose he could not understand. It brought out in strong relief the principle he (Sir R. Webster) had endeavoured to embody in his Amendment, which many hon. Members were desirous of discussing in considering the scheme the Chancellor of the Exchequer had propounded. It was certainly a very remarkable thing that, under the Bill as it stood, however small a benefit was taken by the beneficiary he would have to pay a penalty in the form of an increased duty if the amount passing to him happened to form part of a large estate. He was not going to allude to the case of the millionaire which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was so fond of trotting out on every possible occasion. He would confine himself to showing how that scheme would affect the pockets of ordinary individuals, and for that purpose he would take only simple cases. In estimating a man's ability to pay, other questions than the amount of property he possessed would have to be taken into consideration. By way of illustrating his point he would refer to the ordinary case of a man dying possessed of £100,000, and also leaving, say, 10 children. [Sir W. HARCOURT expressed dissent.] The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House shook his head. Was he objecting to the £100,000, or to the 10 children? But it was not an extravagant supposition to take the case of a man who died worth £101,000, and left his property equally amongst 10 children. The Estate Duty chargeable under this Bill for each of those children receiving £10,100 a-piece was 6 per cent., or £606. Take the opposite case where a father left to an only son a sum of £10,100. The duty in that case would only be £404, the difference being accounted for by the fact that in one case the amount came from a large, and in the other case from a small estate, although the position of the different recipients so far as the amount they actually received was concerned was exactly the same. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite might say that all this was not worth considering. They might say that this kind of criticism was unnecessary, because they had made up their minds that the Estate Duty should be charged in the way provided in the Bill; but the Opposition were justified in bringing out clearly that the Bill did impose upon the recipient of the benefit a tax not at all in accordance with his ability, simply because his portion happened to come from a larger pool. The same thing would happen in regard to small legacies of £200 or £300; and it must not be supposed that, because, for the sake of clearness, he confined himself to striking examples, he was putting exaggerated cases. He was pointing out the absurdity of the scheme of aggregation in the Bill as bearing on the proposition they were now considering. He was not discussing the aggregation by itself. A legatee would have to pay a penalty in proportion to the largeness of the total from which his legacy came. Suppose £50,000 were settled by a stranger upon a man for his life, and at his death passed to his eldest son. Suppose the father had £10,000 of his own and left that to be equally divided between two children. Simply because the father had a life interest in £50,000 that would be treated as estate, making a total of £60,000, and each child would have to pay £250, whereas if the father had not had an interest in the £50,000 each would have paid only £150. This was a case in which he challenged correction. No one who had studied the Bill, and who had made a calculation, would deny that in the case he had put the estate would be treated as a £60,000 estate, and would be charged a 5 per cent. duty.

MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley): It is the legator and not the legatee who pays the money.

*SIR R. WEBSTER said, he did not suppose the hon. Member had given as many minutes to the consideration of this question as he (Sir R. Webster) had given hours. He denied that it was the dead man who paid the tax; if it were, it would be regarded as Probate Duty: it would be treated as coming out of the residuary estate. Could anything be more absurd than saying that the testator paid the duty because the duty passed away from him? He could give many instances of the absurd operation of the principle of aggregation which was embodied in the Bill, coming down to nominal annuities of £200 a year; but he did not want to complicate the matter by arguing it out on special cases. He had taken the case advisedly, on the broadest lines, and had mentioned instances which, though they were multiplied, would only multiply the principle he wanted to bring out. They had now to consider what was the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman in respect of this matter. He hoped it would not be thought that he desired in any way to blame the draftsmen. He had said two or three times from the Front Bench opposite how much Ministers were indebted to skilled draftsmen; he did not wish in anything he said to be understood as casting any reflection upon the draftsmen of the Bill; his criticisms applied rather to the directions given to the draftsmen to embody absurdities in the Bill in order to carry out a certain policy. The Bill started by speaking about an Estate Duty, which at first looked like a Probate Duty, to be paid partly or wholly by the executors. But when they passed to other sections a very different state of things arose. Having by Clause 5 provided that a certain duty should be paid, the Bill further provided by Sub-section 3 of Clause 7 that a certain portion of the Estate Duty should be a charge upon the person receiving any property coming out of an estate; and, more extraordinary still, in Clause 12 there was the remarkable provision that in the case of all wills made after the commencement of the Act the Estate Duty was to be borne by the person to whom the benefit was going, and the executor was to recover from the legatee or successor the whole rateable proportion of the Estate Duty. They then at once passed from the Probate Duty, and got into the category of Succession Duty. Where was the analogue now? There were hundreds of thousands—nay, millions—of wills throughout the country which would be affected by this Bill. He was sure, speaking as a member of the profession he was no longer entitled to represent in the House, that the Law Officers of the Crown might well, on behalf of the Legal Profession, thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the amount of work that Clause 12 would give to the lawyers. The unfortunate clients would equally not thank him. So far from the duty being an analogue to the Probate Duty, everything above 3 per cent. was to be paid by the legatee or the successor to the executor. In other words, the whole of the graduation and excess tax, which was created by graduation, was no longer to be paid on the passing of the estate, but paid and recovered from the legatee or successor. This point was indirectly brought out on Thursday by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for East Lothian, and he suspected that it was to a certain extent a revelation to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Sir R. Webster) could not help thinking that if the right hon. Gentleman had appreciated that in the case of all new wills the whole Estate Duty was to be put upon the legatee or successor, if he had appreciated that under all existing wills everything above 3 per cent. was put upon the legatee or successor, he could scarcely have spoken so, glibly as he had done, of this being an analogue to the Probate Duty. If the Estate Duty in full proportion was to be paid by the legatee and successor, what became of the justice of the suggestion that the Estate Duty was to be charged, not in proportion to the amount which the man received, but according to the mere accidental circumstance that what he did receive came either from a large or a small estate? That was the position of the Opposition in the matter, whether they were right or wrong. They would, possibly, be voted down by some hundreds of hon. Members, who never appreciated even the most elementary considerations of the subject. No doubt, the organs of the Government in the Press would say that the result of his argument was a long, dull speech in which no one paid any attention; but he cared not for that kind of criticism. He wanted to bring it home to the Committee that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not doing what he suggested he was doing, when he introduced the Budget, and that was, taxing people according to the ability to pay. The right hon. Gentleman was placing the penalty on the small man who received £100 legacy or the £500 legacy; and had the good luck—or rather the ill fortune—of receiving it from the estate of a man having above £10,000. He thought there should be some alteration in the way small legacies were left, because it was singularly unjust that there should be this additional burden on small legatees who received their money out of large estates. There was another very important question involved in this matter, one which embraced an entirely different consideration, and that was the absolute uncertainty that would be introduced into the Government scheme, by virtue of the varying tax, which was to be measured not by the sum received but by the total out of which that sum came. He was not attacking the principle of aggregation—the principle, namely, that the total benefit a man received in various other ways from an estate should be calculated in making out the Probate Duty he was to pay. But did the right hon. Gentleman imagine that estates of £25,000 or £100,000 could be wound up in a few weeks or months? They all knew that according to the nature of an estate a very considerable amount of time must be involved in winding it up. Take the case of shares in an Australian bank or a South American railway. It was utterly impossible to ascertain, in the course of a few days, the real value of such an estate. Again, what would happen when an estate got close to one of the six lines into which the right hon. Gentleman broke his system of aggregation under £100,000? Did not the right hon. Gentleman know that there would be an attempt made to get the estate below the line? Remember that a difference of £20 in an estate would make a difference of £200 in the Estate Duty. Many people thought it was not a sin to evade, as far as possible, the payment of the Queen's taxes, and there was no doubt that, though his right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's thought it was the greatest sin that could possibly be committed, there was a natural tendency to try to evade taxes. There was another point. At present, if a man was left £10,000, he could go to the executors and get his £10,000 at once, paying the duty; but under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman such a man would, in the future, be told he could not get his legacy until it was known how much the estate was, as, if it were £90,000, he would have to pay £4 10s. per cent., and if it were £100,000 he would have to pay more. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that those were circumstances that would affect the amount of the tax recoverable and the expenses of levying it. The right hon. Gentleman might have the advice of the hon. and learned Member for East Lothian that his Budget was based on logical and scientific principles, but the practical way would be to wind up the estate at once, so that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might get his tax quickly. Reasonable as his proposition was, and just as it was to the Exchequer, he was sure that the mechanical majority of the Government would vote it down. But before the Amendment was rejected, the Opposition desired to make it clear to the House, and through the House to the country, that this tax did not proceed on the principle which the right hon. Gentleman himself laid down, that it was not assessed according to the person's ability to pay it, but according to the accidental circumstance that the legacy came out of a large estate. They must also protest against a plan which was neither a tax on the alienation or passing over an estate, or on parts of an estate, which so altered existing wills that the testator, in every case, would have to make a new will, if he desired to have his wishes before the Act was passed carried out, which meant the loss of money to the Exchequer, and great delay and expense in winding up an estate. For those reasons, some of which he hoped would commend themselves to hon. Gentlemen opposite, he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out the word "all," and insert the words—

"The benefit accruing to any person on the death of the deceased in any."—(*Sir Richard Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'all' stand part of the Clause."

*Sir W. HARCOURT: I will endeavour to address myself to the very fair speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and to state some practical reasons why I cannot accept the Amendment. By this Amendment the hon. and learned Gentleman raises the whole question whether, assuming graduation, we should grâduate upon the A Duties, which partake of the character of probate, or whether we should graduate upon the B Duties, which are of the character of legacy and succession, and the hon. and learned Member argues that we ought to graduate, not upon the A Duties but upon the B.

Sir R. WEBSTER: If you assume graduation.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I will assume graduation. I know that the right hon. Member for St. George's is against it, and that the Leader of the Opposition is in favour of it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said I was in favour of it.

Sir W. HARCOURT: On the Second Reading of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman was extremely careful to protest against its being supposed that he was against graduation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR : I said it was not necessary to raise the question of graduation—that the intrinsic absurdities of the Budget could be sufficiently exposed without touching on the abstract question of graduation at all.

Sir W. HARCOURT : Either the right hon. Gentleman is for graduation or against it. The Committee are about to come to a Division, and then, I suppose, it will be seen what are the views of gentlemen on the Opposition side, including gentlemen who generally act with the Opposition, including my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham, who, at all events, is in favour of graduation. I will, therefore, assume graduation in dealing with the plan of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight.

Sir R. WEBSTER : My objection would be equally strong if there had been no graduation, assuming that the Estate Duty is to be charged on the capital value of the estate and not upon the amount received.

*Sir W. HARCOURT : I will take it upon that ground. As I understand, the hon. and learned Member proposes to impose a duty on legacies and succession, and I have to consider what would be the result of the Amendment if carried. Well, then, one of my main objections is that his proposal is one of insolvency, and it destroys every means of raising taxation to meet the expenditure which hon. Gentlemen opposite demanded for the Fleet. I do not quite understand whether the hon. and learned Member proposes to leave the present Probate and Succession Duty alone or not.

Sir R. WEBSTER : Those duties make no difference to my scheme, but I would not have the smallest objection to deal with probate and succession.

*Sir W. HARCOURT : I should have the greatest objection, because it would destroy our proposals for the equalisation of treatment for realty and personal property. What would be the use to make a proposal to amend the Death Duties if we are going to leave the Probate Duty and Estate Duty as they are—anomalies which it has been the object of everybody to remove? The hon. and learned Gentleman contends that instead of graduating upon the Probate Duty we should have graduated on the Legacy and Succession Duty. What would be the result of that? By the hon. and learned Gentleman's plan we would at once lose £6,000,000 of the present Revenue, and as we have to find £3,500,000 more, therefore the hon. and learned Member's duty would have to be so graduated as to yield £9,500,000. Now, what would be the result to the legatees, whose interests are said to be so carefully attended to in the plan of the hon. and learned Member? The difficulty to be encountered is, that we cannot graduate any higher than the rates fixed in the Resolution of the House. Therefore, if the Amendment were adopted, we would lose the £6,000,000 under the Probate and Estate Duty; and would have to get it out of the Legacy Duty, upon the scale of graduation fixed by the Resolution. That is absolutely impossible; and so far from raising the money to meet the demands of the Fleet, you would render our Revenue insolvent. But, even supposing we could graduate the Legacy Duty to any extent we pleased, the graduation, in order to yield £9,500,000, would have to be nearly doubled. The 2 per cent. on small estates must be 3½ per cent.; the 3 per cent. below £10,000, 5 per cent.; the 4 per cent. between £10,000 and £25,000 would have to be raised to 7 per cent.; and the maximum rate would be not 8 but 14 per cent; so that, adding the 10 per cent. which may be payable under the existing Legacy Duty, the duty under the plan of the hon. and learned Member might be 24 per cent. That is the result of the practical scheme which is to render such benefits to the legatees and to the beneficiaries of these estates. Again, if the money were levied on the Legacy Duty, nothing would be collected under that duty in the course of the present financial year; it is only under the Probate Duty that any money can be got in the present year. In that case we would have abolished the whole of the Probate Duty during this year. Under these circumstances, there would be insolvency to the amount of at least £5,000,000 during the present year, and the only way in which we can meet the situation, in which the hon. and learned Member's proposal would land us, would be by a loan to fill the vacuity created. Is it possible to conceive that the House of Commons, wanting to raise Revenue in order to meet extraordinary expenditure, could be expected to adopt such a proposal? The real answer to the Amendment, to which I am now coming—— [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen are always ready to borrow money, but they do not care how it is repaid. That is their finance, but these are not the principles of the Government. The hon. and learned Member said that the Government founded their scheme upon the principle of the Probate Duty. That is perfectly true, and to that principle we absolutely adhere. The whole of our scheme, as developed from the first clause of the Bill, is an analogue of the Probate Duty; and we stand upon that principle. So far from saying that the new Estate Duty has any reference to the interest taken by the beneficiary, I have, from the first, emphatically stated that the duty has nothing to do with that interest. I stated clearly in my speech introducing the Budget that our principle is that, upon the devolution of property of all descriptions, the State takes its share first, before any of the successors in title or beneficiaries; and I denied that the Government are taking from the legatee anything that ever belonged to him or was intended to belong to him. The fact is, that this duty is a debt to the State; the legatee has no interest whatever in this debt, the State being the first creditor upon the property; and whatever the State does not take remains as the share of the legatee. That is the principle on which economists have always treated the Death Duties. I have shown that they were thus treated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. I have already said that it is most important to keep that matter in view. It must not be supposed that there is any ambiguity on the part of the Government as to the principles on which this Bill is founded. Who is it that pays this duty to the State? The executor, the personal representative of the deceased. He has to make the first payment, not to the legatees, but to the State, and he takes it out of the estate of the deceased, not out of the estate of the beneficiaries. Nothing can be clearer than the principle upon which this plan is founded, and I maintain that in Clause 1 I have not departed in any sense from that principle—that is to say, the payment of the Probate Duty out of the estate of the deceased by his personal representative. That is all the Revenue has to do with the matter. The Revenue receives that amount, but it knows nothing of what is done with the residue, which is distributed according to the will of the testator. Therefore, under Clause 1 I say we have nothing to do with anything whatever except the principle of probate and the payment under probate to the State. The hon. and learned Gentleman commented with great force upon the difference between the probate principle under Clause 1 and the principle under Clause 12. Upon that I would observe that Clause 12 is an entirely subordinate part of the Bill. It has nothing to do with the interest of the Revenue. If Clause 12 were out of the Bill altogether the Revenue would not lose a farthing. The money has been paid to the State by the personal representative upon the graduated scale. Clause 12 was introduced into the Bill because it was thought that it might be advisable to distribute the burden thrown upon the residuary legatee of the debt paid to the State among all the beneficiaries. Clause 12 was introduced in the interest of other persons, and not in the interest of the Revenue, and if Sub-section (a) of Clause 12 were taken out of the Bill the whole of the terrible difficulty which the hon. and learned Gentleman has raised about diminishing the interests of the legatee would disappear. Things would remain exactly as they are now under the Probate Duty. Every one of the objections which the hon. and learned Gentleman takes arose upon Clause 12, and not upon Clause 1. When we come to Clause 12 we can discuss this matter, and I will not, therefore, go into it elaborately now. I will only consider generally the reasons why Clause 12 was put in. It was thought that it might be well to relieve the residuary legatee, who now bears the whole burden of the duty, by distributing it among the beneficiaries. If the Committee object to that they may omit Sub-section (a) of Clause 12. So long as the Revenue is protected, I maintain a perfectly open mind as to the method of collecting the duty. This is merely a question of collection, and if the Committee thinks that the whole ought to be collected from the residuary legatee I do not object. I may, however, remind the Committee that it is not until a figure over £25,000 is reached that the extra burden on the residuary legatee arises.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: How about settled property?

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he did not think any difficulty would arise in the case of settled property, because the payment would, to a great extent, distribute itself. He thought, however, that there were some difficulties with respect to realty which might arise, and which it might be desirable to meet under Clause 12. Under Clause 1 the Government had stood, and did stand, on the principle of the Probate Duty. He knew that the Leader of the Opposition had said more than once that he did not approve of the principle of the Probate Duty. He would ask, did he approve or not of the principle that the duty should be charged upon what was left by a man and not upon what was received by his successors?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said that the Probate Duty, regarded as a tax, was a perfectly fair tax if you do not make it a principal source of Revenue.

*SIR W. HARCOURT said, that the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have in his mind the maxim, *de minimis non curat lex.* He did not object to the probate principle when only £6,000,000 were raised by its application, but thought that it became a wrong principle when it was proposed so to apply it as to raise £3,500,000 more. The duty was a fair duty, and accorded with the old system of taxation in feudal times, when the State took possession of the whole property of a deceased man, and, having satisfied its claims out of the estate, returned it upon conditions to his successor. The hon. and learned Gentleman proposed to abolish this duty, which yielded £6,000,000 to the Revenue—a sum which the Leader of the Opposition viewed apparently as a *quantité négligeable.* The Probate Duty had every quality to recommend it to a Chancellor of the Exchequer; it was collected in the very simplest way, and speedily. He must, therefore, decline absolutely to part with this duty and to substitute for it another which would be collected with difficulty and would create a number of complications. He denied that he had been taken by surprise by his own Bill, as the hon. and learned Gentleman had suggested. From the first he had had a very clear view of the principles on which the Death Duties ought to be reformed, and he intended to adhere to them with the support, he hoped, of what was termed his "mechanical" majority. He did not understand why majorities only should be called "mechanical," for he had observed that minorities were equally "mechanical."

MR. BYRNE (Essex, Walthamstow) said, he wished that the Committee had been told what instructions were given to the gentlemen who had furnished the figures which the right hon. Gentleman had placed before the Committee.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I merely asked them what would be the financial result of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite.

*MR. BYRNE said, that the gentlemen who had furnished the figures had not had the advantage of hearing the views of the hon. and learned Gentleman. Given the same persons to tax and the same property in respect of which the tax was to be levied, why should it not be possible to obtain the same amount of money by one method of procedure as by another? Given the same persons and properties, there were various ways in which this taxation could be so adjusted as to work fairly while producing all the revenue that was desired. He did not pretend to be a financial authority, but as an ordinary observer of what was going on he thought he might give expression to the views that occurred to him. He was aware that this Amendment was said to be a bankruptcy Amendment, but he should have thought that if it was possible to bring in a Resolution of so unjust of character as that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it was equally possible to bring in a Resolution correcting the injustice. If that were admitted, there was an end to the suggestion about this being a bankruptcy Amendment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that what he had to look at was the receipt of revenue and not to the mode of collection. He (Mr. Byrne) thought, however, that the levying of the revenue ought to have reference to what was just and right, and, whatever the Chancellor of the Exchequer might think *qua* Chancellor of the Exchequer, he could not acquit the Government of pressing on a scheme of taxation which was monstrously unjust. This question was directly raised by the Amendment, which went to the vital principle of the Bill. There were essential differences between the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the system under which the scheme of Probate Duty was carried out. Where a man was parting with property, it did not matter to whom he was going to sell it, he had to pay a certain amount to the State in respect to the alienation of that property, and he actually paid an *ad valorem* duty on the value of the property independently of the person to whom it was conveyed. It was exactly the same with regard to the Probate Duty. There was an alienation of property there, and duty had to be paid before there was any alienation of property just in the same way as they were told that land should pay duty before alienation. What was the result? As a man's estate had to bear his debts, so it had to bear Probate Duty. Then the other form of taxation was upon enjoyment; and just as under the present system of Legacy and Succession Duty the charge was upon what a man enjoyed, so in the present instance, as far as the duty was levied like the Legacy and Succession uty, it ought to be charged in respect of enjoyment. That was just what the Bill did not do. Consider the difference in method, and how far this tax was really carried out as a Probate Duty. In the first place, alienation duties were paid by the alienor, either directly or indirectly, as purchasers generally paid duties. Where a settlement was being made the *ad valorem* duty was paid by stamp out of the general estate, and was no burden upon the property afterwards. So far with regard to Probate Duty. As to Legacy and Succession Duty, that was paid by the persons who were to enjoy the property, without reference at present to the capital or sale value of the property. Each of those methods had worked well. Would the present scheme work equally advantageously? Undoubtedly it would have been competent to raise the same amount by means of increased Probate, Legacy, and Succession Duties. But another scheme had been put forward for the first time, and the House required to examine and see whether it was a fair scheme. As far as the amount to be paid was concerned, this partook of the nature of Probate Duty—regard was had to all that the testator had to part with. He was, of course, referring so far only to the general leading principle. The whole estate, real and personal, was treated as if Probate Duty were going to be charged and paid at once. That was an alienation. But having found how much could be got out of the estate, the Bill proceeded, as far as real estate was concerned, simply to increase the burden of Succession Duty, calculating it upon capital instead of upon the true principle in taxation of that description—the enjoyment of the property by the various individuals. The old Probate Duty was done away with in name, but a tax was imposed which was to include the amount formerly raised by means of Probate Duty. That old tax might have been increased for the purpose of revenue, but was no longer to be levied like Probate Duty paid by the executor, and then no longer a burden on the estate. The Bill treated the residuary legatee as if he were a pecuniary legatee. That was a most extraordinary doctrine. A man's debts were not paid out of his residuary estate; he was obliged to pay them out of his property before he could call it his own. And so the old Probate Duty was always payable before a man had anything to dispose of. Colloquially, paying out of residue was spoken of, but the expression was not strictly accurate—there was no residue until it was paid. The right hon. Gentleman's view of his scheme was not the true one. From beginning to end of this Bill the charge was treated as payable by the person having the first enjoyment of the estate, and would remain a charge upon it if not entirely paid by the person having the first life or limited interest. That was not a payment in any sense like Probate Duty. If the life tenant paid it he would have a charge upon the land for it. If he chose to pay it by instalments and died within two years the charge would continue for the remainder of eight years, although the property might be deteriorating from day to day, and the value had very much gone down. On an estate with open coal mines worth £25,000 in the market the successor paying ordinary duty would pay about £144 a year for 8 years; and that would remain a charge upon the property though the coal might have been all worked out within two years. An ordinary mortgagee under such circumstances would, of course, foreclose and sell in time before the property ceased to be valuable. Though it might afterwards be only worth £10,000 the charge would continue at that rate. That was a method of taxation which might commend itself to some; but, apart from the doctrine of aggregation (which seemed to be iniquitous) the whole system of taxation was false where enjoyment was charged upon as if it were alienation. Income Tax also was not charged upon the capital value of, but upon the profit made from, a business worth in the market a large sum because of goodwill and perhaps "the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice." So it should be with all enjoyment taxes. It could not be a true principle to calculate upon the footing of an alienation duty and then charge it upon the enjoyment income of the person direct.

*MR. MOULTON (Hackney, S.) said, the powerful and vigorous speech of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight showed that he had given great attention to the subject, and had thoroughly worked himself into a conviction of the justice of the principles he had enunciated. He had always admired the power possessed by his hon. and learned Friend of shutting his eyes very tight or keeping them wide open, as he chose. It would be difficult to find a better example of his qualities in that respect than on this occasion. He had denounced the scheme of this Bill in most impassioned language as being unjust, unreasonable, and illogical, but he had not taken the trouble to consider the principle of the Bill. It was no good using terms of abuse to the propositions and arguments of one's enemies, but to give them every consideration. First, he would show that the Bill was clearly fair in principle. The Bill was needed because the Death Duties had become a laughing-stock from their anomalies and inequalities, yet the argument put forward against it was—"Your new scheme is illogical because it is not the same as any of those already condemned systems." It was said to be illogical because it was not identical with either the Probate or Legacy Duties, although in some respects it resembled them both, but it would have been much more illogical if it had been like either in carrying out their unsound principles. What was the principle underlying this measure? It was that when a man died the proportion of his property which went to the State was payable first, before he had any right to alienate or dispose of that which remained. That principle fairly carried out and nothing else was the foundation of the Bill as regarded testamentary dispositions. Taking that proportion at 10 per cent., for the sake of argument, the other 90 per cent. a testator had the power to alienate. Two courses might here be taken. He might be left free to alienate it as he pleased, or he might be penalised in some way if he did not alienate as was desired. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight wanted to interfere with the free disposition of the remaining 90 per cent., while the Bill left him free to dispose of it as he pleased. He had heard with delight the cheers of the hon. and learned Member's Party when he was denouncing the Radical Government for being unjust and unreasonable in not penalising the practice of, as it was called, "making an eldest son." He had not looked up to the Gallery to see whether any Members of the other House were present, but he wondered what their reflections would have been upon hearing a taxation proposed which would put a prohibitory weight on anybody leaving the bulk of his estates to an eldest son. They would probably have fervently exclaimed "Save us from our friends." [Sir R. WEBSTER: Why?] The hon. and learned Member would see why if, remembering his mathematics, he would take the two schemes for raising a certain sum of money, the gradation being in the one according to the single legacy and in the other according to the total estate. He would find that where the bulk of the property was left to one person a penalty would under his plan be imposed of double or treble duty as compared with cases where it was left in fairly equal portions to all the members of the family. But the hon. and learned Member's language would not be forgotten, and when the

House had thoroughly established this just and great principle of taxation with regard to Death Duties it would be time to revise the Legacy Duties, and to take care, according to the "just and reasonable principle" put forward on the other side, that the big legacies left in the case of enormous estates subject to settlements which prevented the testator from dividing them equally among those who had equal claims upon him should bear the largest share of Legacy Duty. When the time came for making that alteration the House would remember the language they had heard that night as to that course being "just and reasonable." The next question to decide was: what should be the proportion taken by the State? The proportion was to be greater the larger the estate. That was thoroughly clear, sensible, and logical. They all knew that the Income Tax was very unfair and unjust, and the reason was that income was not the measure of a man's wealth, but indicated only the rate at which at the moment he was increasing his wealth. Nobody could learn how rich a man was, or how much taxation he could bear, merely by knowing at what rate his wealth was at the moment increasing. At present a man with £20,000 in Consols was only taxed like a person who had risen, say, in the Civil Service to £550 a year. They all recognised that that was an unfair exercise of the power of levying taxation. The only remedy would be to levy a tax upon the realised wealth possessed by individuals. But as they were not prepared to face the difficulties of levying a capital tax and taxing a man year by year on his realised wealth, the State waited until his death, and then taxed that realised wealth on the principle that the larger its amount the greater the proportion it could afford to give to the State. Once grant that that was a fair principle (and nobody could deny that it was logical and clear) and the whole of this Bill was carried in all its main lines. The remainder of the Bill was simply the necessary additions to prevent it being readily evaded. Having arrived at the principle that a man should pay a portion to the State and then have the privilege of alienating the rest as freely as he willed, and that the proportion it should bear to the whole estate should increase with the amount of the estate, how were they to get that portion? So far as the Government were concerned, they took it before the man had a right to dispose of one penny of the property. But it must come out of some of the property which was left behind. How did the matter stand before? Take a tax to which this Estate Duty is closely analogous—namely, the Probate Duty. The rule there was to take the whole duty from the man who had the residue and to make him pay the tax upon everything, both that which he did and did not get. The legacies, large or small, given to other persons were allowed to go untouched and undiminished. If there was no residuary legatee and the whole property was left specifically to one or more persons, or in even shares, then the duty was divided over the whole of the property. Many people thought it was very unfair that the residuary legatee should bear the whole of the tax. It led to great inequalities of treatment. In the case of an estate consisting of £5,000 Consols left to each of five sons they would bear it equally; but if the testator left £1,000 each to A, B, C, and D, and the residue to E, then E would have to bear the whole tax. [Sir R. WEBSTER: Not at all.] Some people might call that fair, but it was, at all events, open to question. What course had the Government adopted? The amount of duty had been largely increased. How was it to be borne? The old plan might be followed of throwing the whole of it upon the residuary legatee, or, on the other hand, it might be provided that each should bear his share. By the Bill the choice was left to the testator to do either the one or the other. If he did nothing, by the rule of interpretation in the Bill as it stood (this was not a matter affecting the fiscal part of the Bill) the State would presume that the testator meant the shrinkage due to the tax to be evenly divided over the whole of his estate *pari passu*. The House might or might not approve of that. It was not vital to the Bill—it was only a rule of interpretation. It, however, seemed to be fair. It did not seem just (where the testator had not given any direction in the matter) to make one man liable for the tax on the whole estate. Next came the objection that the Bill made people pay more when the legacies came from big than when they came from small estates. There was no truth in that at all. If a testator provided for the payment of the toll to the State, it would be paid in the way he directed. But if a man in drawing up his will dealt with his estate as though he had a right to alienate it all, then the State was forced to take its toll from some part of that which he purported to dispose of, and naturally would consider that all the legacies were swollen more than they ought to be in the proportion of the duty. How could it be said that this plan was unjust when people knew that it would be the rule of interpretation if no other provision were made in the will? So much for testamentary dispositions. Next, to take the case put by the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight, of an estate of £50,000 settled on a man for life with remainder to his eldest son. The man might have saved £20,000, which he is supposed to have left to two younger sons. They would have to pay at the rate corresponding to an estate of £70,000. Was that unfair? Long before this Bill was brought in it was felt that the great difficulty in dealing with estates was the practice of making settlements. How far it was right that they should be permitted was a matter of individual opinion. There was a strong feeling growing up that the unlimited right of making settlements ought to be curtailed. This Bill, however, did not propose to deal with this question. But they could not shut their eyes to the fact that a large portion of the property of the wealthy existed in the form of settlements under which they had a beneficial interest. It would be shirking the responsibility of making the tax a just one if Parliament confined itself to dealing with wills, knowing that the flank of the Bill could be turned by making settlements instead of testamentary dispositions. He thought the framers of the Bill had done their duty in a most fair manner in facing the difficulty of settlements and dealing with them, as well as with testamentary dispositions, as they had done in this Bill. What the Government said was this—"We consider that that which passes at the death of a man should include not only that which he is competent to dispose of by will, but also property which was his for life and passed away on his death to his wife or child, even though technically the right of the successor to it did not depend on a will, but depended on some other disposition." He asked hon. Members to think of some of the estates they knew of and to decide whether, when property so passed otherwise than by will on the death of the owner of the estate, such property was not regarded by the father as part of the family wealth, and taken into account in his testamentary dispositions. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) said, that in case £50,000 were settled upon an eldest son, the other sons would have to pay extra because of the existence of that settlement. No doubt this was true, but it was to be remembered that but for the settlement of £50,000 their share of the estate would probably have been reduced. The fact that the eldest son was thereby provided for enabled the father to leave the whole of the rest of the property to the younger sons, who thus would each receive the half, instead of the third, of that property. If the point were put to them there was no doubt that they would say they would rather pay £200 or £300 more duty than not have the £50,000 settled upon the eldest son. He knew that a great many of those who were listening on both sides of the House wished to be fair in this matter, and he thought they would agree that it was fairer to include settled estate, as it was included in the Bill, than to exclude it altogether. He claimed that the Bill fairly tried to include everything which was part of the practical wealth of a man in that which was called the principal value of his estate. The levying a toll upon this in increasing proportion as its amount increased was the substance of this part of the Bill, and the mode in which this payment was taken out of the estate was a secondary consideration. But if the House was prepared to authorise the levying of a toll by the State upon the total value of a man's property, such toll to increase according to the value of the property, it must do so either by leaving it to the man to decide how the duty should come out of the specific property he left (in which case an interpretation must be put upon his silence), or it must say absolutely how the duty was to be borne. The latter course would be supported by neither side of the House. It was, therefore, necessary to take the former course, and one way of so doing was that suggested by the Government. Clause 12 as it stood (although it was no essential part of the Bill) said that the man's silence should be construed to mean that the duty was to be borne *pari passu.* He could not help thinking that this was much fairer than to allow the enormously increased burden to fall entirely on the residuary legatee.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK (London University) submitted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given no clear and sufficient reason against the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman, in an interesting letter to *The Times*, stated—and he had repeated to-night—that rights of inheritance were given by wills; that the power of willing was given by the State, and he drew the inference that the State was the primary heir. The right hon. Gentleman justified what was now proposed by the precedent of what was done in feudal times. Surely that would not be regarded as a satisfactory precedent by supporters of the Government. At any rate, it was a retrograde step, and a precedent which Liberals, he should have thought, would have been very loth to follow. No doubt, wills were of comparatively recent origin. They did not involve any increase of the rights of children at the expense of the State, but they involved an increase of the rights of the dead to modify the previous custom with a view of securing a fair division. The Greeks had no wills until the Peloponnesian War; the primitive Romans had no wills. The Teutonic races had no wills in the time of Tacitus. Among the Hindoos, the first will was said to be that of Omichund in 1758. He was not sure that archaic customs and rights had much bearing on the question; but when the proposals of Government were justified by general statements as to ancient laws and customs, it seemed well to point out that they had no sanction from any such venerable authority. The right of the heir was far older than the power of willing. The claims of the State were the creation of law; the right of the children were primeval and preceded the very idea of a State. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir W. Harcourt) stated in his Budget speech that every authority on political economy was in favour of the principles he proposed. He had already denied this statement, and challenged the right hon. Gentleman to produce any evidence in support of the statement. This he had not done, but he repeated the same assertion to-night, and quoted his own Budget speech in support of it. The right hon. Gentleman claimed, indeed, the support of Adam Smith on the strength of a passage in which the father of political economy expressed his opinion that—

> "It is not very unreasonable that the rich should contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more than in that proportion."

What, however, was Adam Smith's position? The House would judge whether the right hon. Gentleman was justified in leading them to suppose that he had the authority of Adam Smith. In his introductory chapter Smith laid it down that—

> "The subjects of every State ought to contribute towards the support of the Government as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities;"

and he went on to explain—

> "That is in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the State. The expense of government to the individuals of a great nation is like the expense of management to the joint tenants of a great estate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their respective interests in the estate."

He laid it down, then, as a general axiom, in opposition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that taxes should be in proportion to income. Having done this, he discussed different classes of taxes, and when he came to those on the transference of property, he said—

> "All taxes upon the transference of property of every kind, so far as they diminish the capital value of that property, tend to diminish the funds destined for the maintenance of productive labour. They are all more or less unthrifty taxes. . . . Even when they are proportioned to the value of the property transferred they are still unequal. When they are not proportioned to this value, which is the case with the greater part of the Stamp Duties and duties of registration, they are still more so."

He then discussed taxes on houses. These, he said, would fall most heavily on the rich—

> "A tax upon house-rents, therefore, would in general fall heaviest upon the rich; and in this sort of inequality there would not, perhaps, be anything very unreasonable that the rich should

> contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more than in that proportion."

The quotation referred to by the Chancellor was, therefore, merely a defence of the House Tax, and gave no support whatever to graduation, which Adam Smith had already condemned. The only other authority which the Chancellor had produced in support of his proposal was John Stuart Mill. But what did Mill say? His words were—

> "The principle of graduation, as it has been called—that is, the levying a higher percentage on larger sums, though its application to general taxation would be a violation of first principles—is quite unobjectionable as applied to legacies and inheritances;"

that was to say, not to estates as proposed in the Bill, but to legacies and successions as proposed in the Amendment. Mill had never expressed himself in support of the proposals of the Government. If they were to have graduation it ought logically to be, not on the estate, but on the legacy. He thought he had shown that of the two great authorities cited by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, one, Adam Smith, was against graduation altogether, and the other, John Stuart Mill, was in favour, not of graduation on estates, but of graduation on legacies and succession. The House would judge whether it was right for a Chancellor of the Exchequer to come down and tell them, and through them, the country, that economical authorities were in favour of his proposals, when, on being challenged, he only referred to two, and those two, when examined, were found to be against him, and not in his favour. Now, why had economists denounced graduation? Economists were not capitalists, and had no desire to protect capitalists. They condemned these proposals in the interests of good finance, of justice, and of the working man. They pointed out that if this system were begun there was no logical point in which to stop. Then, as shown by Professor Fawcett and other economists, a tax upon income merely led to the denial of some luxury or comfort. But a tax on capital, as this was, fell eventually on the working man. No doubt this imposition would fall primarily on children, but political economists were agreed that taxes on capital would fall ultimately on the working classes. It would create the maximum of distress for the minimum of result, because it would be so uncertain in its results and press with so much severity upon particular neighbourhoods. Every year they would have some 10, 20, or 50 properties on which heavy fines would be inflicted. What would happen? The person coming into the property would shut up the house; go away and live cheaply elsewhere, probably abroad, for a few years, until he had saved up the amount; or, at any rate, he must sell horses, dismiss grooms, gardeners and woodmen, diminish his expenditure with tradesmen of all kinds, and the result would be a dislocation of village life, a sudden diminution of employment, the ruin of small tradesmen—a sudden curse descending first on one village and then on another, which could not be foreseen or guarded against. Who would be the real sufferers? Who would be the victims of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? The landowner, or the poor men whose employment was taken away, the small tradesmen, who were ruined? This cruel injustice would, however, be to some extent diminished if they deducted the amount, not from the estate, but from the legacy or succession. Another advantage which would result would be the greater certainty that the State would receive the amount of the duty. No executor would pay away legacies to others without making sure that the duty was paid. But the Government were evidently afraid that residuary legatees would omit to pay the Estate Duty, which would come out of their own pocket. He would ask the Committee to look at the extraordinary provisions of Clause 8. None of the property of the deceased was to be sold until the Estate Duty was paid; no stocks, shares, funds, or securities were to be sold. Where, then, were the executors to get the money to pay the duty? Other complications would arise. Insurance Offices, for instance, found that persons were very anxious to receive moneys payable under policies as soon as possible; but they would hereafter be unable to pay the policies until the Estate Duty was paid. This would be a great inconvenience to the public. There was, indeed, one source from which he feared that in too many cases the necessary sum would be obtained by the executors and others—namely, from the timber. This proposal would lead to the ruin of those woodlands which were the beauty of our country. There was another question of great importance arising out of this. Under Clause 8 no stocks, shares, or securities standing in the name of a deceased person, either alone, or conjointly with others, could be sold until the Estate Duty was paid. No person could give a good discharge unless the Commissioners gave a certificate that the duty was paid, every purchaser of any stocks, shares, funds, or securities must not only see, but must retain and be always able to produce, this certificate. In the case of Consols and other available securities held by merchants, banks, insurance offices, and other business institutions to enable them to make sudden claims if one of the trustees were to die, they would be unable to sell any of these securities until the Estate Duty was paid. They could not quicken the process. That rested with the executors of the deceased, and under Clause 5 might be postponed for eight years. Another point was that no one could safely purchase securities coming out of the name of a deceased person. No doubt Sub-division 3 of Clause 8 said that—

> "Nothing in this section shall invalidate the title of a purchaser for valuable consideration without notice,"

but if the securities came out of a deceased name he had, *ipso facto*, had notice. If it meant that a purchaser might retain his purchase unless he had had notice from the Commissioners that the Estate Duty had not been paid, it reduced all the preceding sections to a farce. It was quite impossible that this clause could be allowed to stand in its present form. He was astonished that it should have been proposed. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that questions raised by this Budget must ultimately be decided by the country. The country, however, would have no opportunity of deciding that or anything else if the Government could prevent it. They had been told, indeed, that if the Government could force their Budget through by a majority of 10 or even of 2 they would do so. The right hon. Gentleman had expressed complete confidence that the country would support the proposals of the Government. No doubt they were tempting. The Government always seemed to think that to say they were taking from one man to give to several was a sufficient justification for the change. This simple, not to say vicious, principle ran through much of their legislation. It was tempting. But was it right? Was it just? Was it wise? It would unsettle everything, upset all calculations, diminish inducements to thrift, and settle the security of investment. He had great confidence in the justice and good sense of his countrymen, and he believed that if their opinion could be taken upon the Budget proposals alone by means of an appeal to the country like the Swiss Referendum they would not sanction these proposals. Now, what was the object of the Government? As he understood they wished to throw more of the burden of taxation on the rich. He would not occupy the time by again going over the ground that had been so ably dealt with by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster). The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney (Mr. Moulton) told them a person might have to pay more because he received less, because it was in the power of the testator to say the whole of the Estate Duty should be paid by the residuary legatee. That was true, but two residuary legatees might receive exactly the same amount, yet one might have to pay a much larger sum than the other. If graduation was to be established it should be on the succession, and not on the estate. The object was that those who inherited most should pay not only in proportion, but more than in proportion. But the proposal in the Bill did not effect this. Two men might inherit exactly the same amount, and yet one might have to pay half again as much as the other. If the Government did not accept this suggestion they ought not to say that they proposed to tax the rich more than the poor, because in a great many cases their proposals would have the very opposite effect. He maintained, therefore, that if they were logical the Government, in order to carry their own principles into effect, ought to support the present Amendment.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer based his chief argument against this Amendment upon financial necessity, and, of course, they must concede that the taxes must be raised and that the Government were primarily responsible for them to the country. He readily conceded, too, that in this year the Government were entitled to additional consideration in consequence of their response to the demands that were made in relation to the defences of the country; but when a Budget was put forward as substituting equality for inequalities, and order for anomalies, it became very necessary to see carefully whether that Budget itself was based on just and equal principles, and the Debate that afternoon, which had been by far the most important contribution to the whole discussion, was chiefly directed to that end. The Amendment challenged the provisions of the Budget as to equality and justice, and suggested a mode in which those principles could be practically established on the general lines of the Bill, and he concluded from the speeches he had heard, and not only the speeches but from many of the provisions of this measure, that the Amendment itself was based on the principles of assimilation and graduation—principles of which were the underlying elements of the Budget. For his part, he accepted the principle of graduation; he believed it to be based upon a proper rule—namely, that of coordinating taxation with ability of payment and with equality of sacrifice; but he thought that rule would be best carried out by dealing with the recipient who had the accruing benefit and the actual present enjoyment, and in whose hands they could measure the benefit derived. And, if he had to vindicate the principle of graduation, he would point out that in the exemptions from the Probate Duty and the Income Tax they had that principle of taxation actually in operation at the present time. Then with regard to assimilation, he believed that in the matter of taxation the present position of realty and personalty was distinctly unequal, and the maintenance of that inequality was in itself undesirable even if it existed only in appearance. There ought to be apparent equality in contribution to taxation, and for that reason he thought that any inequality ought to be removed; and, so far as the Budget carried out that principle he was heartily in favour of it. He could not help thinking that on his own side of the House the differences between realty and personalty and the difficulties of dealing with them respectively had been considerably exaggerated, and even then they did not justify the inequalities of Imperial taxation as between real and personal property. Cases had been quoted referring to persons who held plentiful cash and Consols as representing personalty; but the practical questions they had to deal with in administering estates were not altogether those of cash and Consols. They had to deal, for instance, with leaseholds and with ships as well. Take the case of a large merchant steamer costing as much as an ordinary estate. In case of death the owner paid duty on the capital value, while an estate paid only on the commuted life interest. The case of a ship raised all the difficulties which had been ascribed to realty—those of valuation, sale, and payment. The values were equal; but the ship depreciated as much as realty, and, though a large number of ships were practically unrealizable, the duties had to be raised by some system of insurance taxing the income, the effect being to make a man live according to his means. He took a stronger case with which they were very familiar in the North of England, where whole towns were built on leasehold tenure. He would take the case of a large town in the North which was owned by one freehold owner deriving from it an income of from £80,000 to £100,000 a year. This owner did not contribute anything, at any rate directly and apparently to local taxation as he ought to do, and yet when a leasehold tenant died he had to pay on the capital value of his leasehold, while the freeholder paid only on the commuted life interest—a matter of vast difference. What was the distinction in any of the alleged difficulties between leaseholders and freeholders? Both an estate and a ship had to be valued, and in the case of a ship it was often the more difficult. Each class of property, whether leasehold, freehold, or ships, had, it might be, to be sold in order to raise the duties, and to realise leaseholds or ships was often a great deal more difficult than freeholds, owing to the existence of rents and covenants. It was apparently sometimes forgotten how much personalty there was in the world, and how much realty was dependent upon personalty.

Equality is equity; and he agreed, therefore, with the Associated Chambers of Commerce, which had often resolved that there was need for an equalisation of those duties. To meet some of the arguments he would quote from his own Party's authorised and authoritative chief publication. Here was one extract—

> "It must, however, be conceded that land is now too much an article of commerce, and the value of urban and commercial realty has increased in such large proportion in relation to that of agricultural land and residential country estates that it is not possible to make an absolutely satisfactory defence of the inequality of the Death Duties considered by themselves alone."

But he had a more extraordinary extract from the Unionist Party literature, which said—

> "At present real estate is more highly taxed as regards the Death Duties, but personal property escapes duty."

That would be a balance of taxation which would not be disadvantageous to many of those engaged in various pursuits, but he was afraid it was not true, and he was quite unable to accept that view. But he was bound to admit that he thought there was a case for grave State and Departmental inquiry as to the proportionate burdens upon personalty and realty so far as local taxation, at any rate, was concerned. This was a matter that must be most carefully entered upon and inquiry undertaken, because this question could not be delayed after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. Undoubtedly it involved wide and difficult considerations, but on the other hand he thought it was a matter in which the landed interest was entitled to ask this House and the country to consider whether at present the balance of taxation in that local direction was quite right, and to claim, after inquiry, a fair and proper adjustment, for, if only for social considerations, no class ought to be unjustly treated. So far as the Budget sought to deal with these anomalies and inequalities, he heartily agreed with it; but he asked, did it do so as completely as this Amendment? He thought the Amendment had the advantage. In listening to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) he could not do otherwise than believe that if the Budget removed some anomalies and inequalities it created others which were worse and of greater magnitude, especially in taxing the estate as a whole, instead of following out the principle which was involved in graduation of dealing with those who received and enjoyed the benefit from the various portions of the estate. It had been pointed out by an hon. Member that in the case of a legacy of £5,000, which formed part of a settled estate of £50,000, the legatee would have, for that reason, to pay a much higher rate of duty, though he derived no benefit out of the £50,000. That had been regarded as a great hardship on the legatee, nor did he think that the objections against that part of the scheme had been removed by the speech of the hon. Member for South Hackney. No doubt it was a hardship on the legatee, but there was even a greater question to be considered, and that was whether such a provision was just. If it were not just then it became merely a question of the legatee ransoming his legacy, and to say that he obtained some advantage from the fact that the £5,000 formed part of a rich estate was, in his opinion, wholly without foundation. What would be thought, in commerce, of a claim of a higher price for a commodity simply because it came out of a larger bulk? Yet this absurdity was not greater than taxing a legacy on a higher scale simply because it came from a larger estate. Just graduation was taxation of the legacy itself according to its amount, and the plan of the Bill was ransom and injustice. He also objected to the scheme because, instead of taxing, as it professed to do, according to ability, it involved too great an element of uncertainty and chance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had in his reply pointed out that the provisions set out in Sections 9 and 12 must be dealt with as separate issues, but he (Sir A. Rollit) contended that they must be read as forming part of the Budget proposals treated as a whole. If they considered those sections, moreover, they would see that Section 9 referred to the charge of Estate Duty on property and facilities for raising it, while Section 12 referred to the apportionment of the duty to be paid. That was not only a permissive right to the executor to recoup the duty, it was a clause giving distinct apportionment of that duty, and it seemed to him Sections 9 and 12 had the effect of making the executor a mere agent of the recipient for the payment of the duty which was afterwards to be recouped by him.

Sir W. HARCOURT: If they stand in the Bill.

Sir A. ROLLIT said, the relationship as it stood in the Bill was that of principal and agent. The right hon. Gentleman said "if they stand in the Bill," but they could only take the Bill as a whole. It was a Bill which proposed a whole scheme for the remedy of anomalies and injustices, and for settling the Death and other Duties on a footing of justice and equality. One must look at these sections as elements in the whole scheme, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to him to have contemplated in his first thoughts as a just provision, but one which was not quite consistent with the provisions of Clause 1 as it stood in the Bill. He had only to add a word upon the question of aggregation, and he spoke from some experience of the matter. He was afraid, however, that the scheme would introduce some new difficulties, and that it would, for instance, lead to litigation and delay. It was proposed that the rate of duty should be calculated on the value of the whole of the estate. To do so, therefore, before any legacies could be paid the whole of the estate would have to be valued and often to be actually realised, while by taxing the recipient in return for the State protection of his legacy estates could be much more speedily distributed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had opposed the Amendment on the ground that it would cause a loss to fall upon the Revenue. That was not, in his opinion, a sufficiently good ground for not supporting the Amendment. If the principle of graduation were accepted at all he was prepared to regard the proposed scale as a fair and moderate one, and he saw no reason why even a higher rate of duty should not be levied on the very largest estates of millionaires. He was bound to say, speaking on behalf of the Chambers of Commerce, and he believed, also, for many of his constituents, who belonged chiefly to the middle classes, that, taken as a whole, the Death Duty clauses of the Budget were based on principles that were acceptable to their views; and this was especially the case, and most just, in the greater exemptions which it gave to the less wealthy classes of clerks and tradesmen and the like, who now often had a very hard struggle to make ends meet. But he thought that upon the point under attack to-day an inroad had been made upon its justice and expediency by the speeches delivered on that side of the House; and if the Amendment could be embodied without loss of Revenue, as it might, it would meet more justly the ends and results he assumed the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in view which he himself approved and which the Amendment would achieve more practically and with more real and true equality of incidence.

Mr. WARNER (Somerset, N.) did not consider the speeches of the hon. Member who had just spoken, or of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster), were serious, as all the objections urged by those hon. Members were to Clauses 9 and 12, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated he was willing to concede something on those points. But, with regard to the clause that they were then considering, by which it was proposed that the legatee, and not the legator, would be liable to pay the duty fixed on the whole estate under the graduated scale, he pointed out that it would be better for the Revenue if the payment of the tax were placed upon the estate before it was divided. He thought an exception to this rule might advantageously be made in the case of a small devise of real estate on which the recipient should only be taxed in proportion to the value of the estate that he actually received. He felt that this Budget was a great reform of the taxation of the country, and it was one the people of the country were pleased to get, and that the proposed alteration would weaken it.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, that the hon. Member for Somersetshire, speaking on the question before the Committee, which was on whom the duty would fall, agreed with the Opposition that, in considering such a question, it was desirable to look at the breadth of the shoulders on which they proposed to place the burden; but when the hon. Member went on to say that they should calculate the total ability to pay the tax of the recipient of the legacy on succession, he showed that he did not know the very nature of Probate Duty. They were assured by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the clause made the tax Probate Duty, and if it were Probate Duty, then the tax was not in the nature of payment for services received, but was in the nature of payment for the conveyance to the living man of a certain part of the property of the dead man. In that case, what did it matter to them what was the total ability of the recipient to bear the tax? What they must look to—if the tax were really Probate Duty—was the amount of property conveyed by the enactments of the State, with regard to succession, from the testator to the recipient. The only question was—what had the State given to the recipient? It was that, and that only, that the State had the right, and indeed the possibility, of taxing. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer quoted extracts from his speech on the Second Reading of the Bill to show that, since the Second Reading, he had not changed his opinions—a matter on which the right hon. Gentleman plumed himself very considerably. The right hon. Gentleman said he made it clear on the Second Reading that the incidence of the tax was met by the words the Amendment proposed to leave out, and not by the words it proposed to insert. But what the right hon. Gentleman said about graduation on the introduction of the Budget gave away the case against the Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman then referred to Mr. Pitt's expedients for a system of graduation. He said that Mr. Pitt introduced a system by which a man who had two carriages was to pay more in taxation than the man who had only one carriage. But in the case of a owner of two carriages who had given one away, Mr. Pitt did not make the tax fall on the person who received one of the carriages, and have the tax increased or diminished, not by what was received by the recipient, but by the number of carriages possessed by the man who gave him the carriage. He wished to point out that there was a great difference between the two forms of taxation upon the passage of property at death — the taxation upon the conveyance of property and the taxation upon the enjoyment of property. The taxation on conveyance was, of course, in the nature of Probate Duty, and the taxation on enjoyment was in the nature of Succession or Legacy Duty. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had the option of framing his Finance Bill so that the tax should fall on conveyance or enjoyment; and the right hon. Gentleman selected the Probate Duty. But the country would rather have the tax on the enjoyment of property. All taxes on enjoyment, such as Succession Duty and Legacy Duty, could be regulated in accordance with the consanguinity scale; that was, that in assessing the tax they could take into account whether the man who got the property was the son of the deceased person or a stranger in blood who had come into the property by some happy accident, and it was undoubtedly the desire of the country that the tax should be regulated in that way. But by making it a tax in the nature of Probate Duty, the Chancellor of the Exchequer shut himself out from the opportunity of acting on the consanguinity scale; for, of course, if they put the tax on the whole of the property as it left the dead man's possession, it was impossible to consider the date of relationship to the dead man of those who received his benefaction. The Committee had the advantage of a speech from the hon. and learned Member for South Hackney, who was brought in to bless the Bill, but who cursed it altogether. As the arguments of the hon. and learned Member developed, it became evident that he was giving away the whole case for the Bill. The hon. and learned Member said that the whole of the Succession Duties bristled with anomalies and inequalities. But the gist of the speech of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight was that the scheme of the Government proposed new anomalies and developed fresh inequalities. The hon. and learned Member went on to call attention to what should be the strongest argument in favour of the Amendment. What was the aim of the Radical Party? It was that property should be distributed, and if the Amendment were carried there would be a strong incentive to the distribution of property. If the clause were carried as it was drawn, the man who left the whole of his property to his eldest son would have to pay the heaviest rate, and if, on the other hand, he scattered his property between ten or twenty recipients, he would still, as the clause stood, have to pay the same rate. But if the Amendment was carried, what would have to be considered was the amount received by the individual recipient, and not what was left by the dead man, and on the amount received a lower rate would be levied. Therefore, a testator would have the opportunity by distributing his property of lowering the amount of money he would have to pay to the State. That was a sound argument from the Benches opposite in favour of the Amendment. The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney also said that Clause 12 was wanted in the Bill because it was felt that the whole Estate Duties should not fall upon the residuary legatee; and the hon. and learned Member was, of course, an authority on the reasons why the Bill had been drafted. The hon. and learned Member said it was hard that a man should be taxed, not on what he got, but on what somebody else got. That was a very strong argument in favour of the Amendment. In fact, it was the case for the Amendment. The hon. and learned Member attempted to dispose of one of the arguments of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight, which showed one of the peculiarities and discrepancies of the first clause of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight pointed out that if a man who had a life interest in £50,000 bequeathed it to his son, and had £10,000 of his own, which he left to two other sons, the two sons to whom he left the £10,000 would have to pay duty at the rate, not of 1 per cent., which would be applicable to the amount of money they had received, but 4 per cent., because their elder brother had received £50,000. The hon. and learned Member for South Hackney, in trying to reply to that argument, said that the younger sons should be glad that their £10,000 were left to them clear of the elder brother's claim, and that, therefore, they should not miss paying the extra duty. But suppose it was settled money—that the £50,000 went to the eldest son, and the £10,000 to the younger children—there would, in such a case of settled property, be no advantage to the younger sons that the elder got £50,000. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not seem to care much about the effect of Clause 12 on the case for the Amendment. The Committee could not discuss the Amendment without looking at Clause 12, because the Amendment was a question of the incidence of the tax; and to really understand how the Bill made the tax fall they should look at Clause 12 as well as Clause 1. The right hon. Gentleman said that Clause 12 was immaterial, because it did not assist the Revenue. That might be the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman as the guardian of the Public Purse; but the point of view of every one who hoped to be a residuary legatee was different. Every man who might be a residuary legatee desired to know whether the tax was to fall upon the residue or upon the residuary legatee. The Bill was so drawn that if a follower of the Government desired the tax to fall on the residue, he was referred to Clause 1, as carrying out his wishes; and if another follower of the Government desired that the duty should fall on the individual legatee, Clause 12 was pointed out to him. Both of those alternatives could not be supported. The Committee would like to know on what stool the Government would stand. If they attempted to stand on two stools, it was only natural that the Bill should fall to the ground. They were also told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Amendment was an amendment of insolvency, that it would mean a loss to the Revenue. But the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were based entirely upon supposition, because, in order to get at a correct estimate of what would fall to the Revenue under the Bill for the next three or four years, they must know in what way people who died in that period left their property. If they left their property in lump sums, they would pay a high graduated tax, and if they dispersed it through various beneficiaries they would pay a smaller graduated tax. The right hon. Gentleman having stated that it was Probate Duty proceeded to show that it was Legacy Duty; for he defended the taking of the money from legatees because the State claimed it. But the right hon. Gentleman could not have it both ways. If he defended the taking of the money from the legatee because the State claimed it, he was not taking it from the residuary legatee. With regard to the advantages which would accrue from the Amendment, the first was that the tax would fall upon the recipient of the money. If they went to the executor he could not tell them what passed under settlements, and in other ways, on the death of the testator; but the recipient knew very well what he had got, and could give a true return to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He also thought that the desire to evade the duty would be very much increased by the fact that the duty would be augmented according to the amounts received by other persons. Surely it was necessary and desirable that evasion should be made as difficult as possible. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to have estimated for immense evasions. The right hon. Gentleman's figures of the result of the proposed taxes were far less than the amount that ought to be realised. Where did the difference slip out? By evasions, against which they could close the door if they made the tax fall on the recipient and not on the executor, who would not know where the money had gone to. He had already spoken of the encouragement of the distribution of property that would be affected by the Amendment. If it were carried the matter of winding-up an estate could be concluded in a reasonable time, because they were only looking to the one estate that passed into the hands of the recipient. He could sum up what he received, and make an affidavit and get his certificate in a few weeks; but if they made the duty fall on the total amount of the property situated all over the world, looking at the provision of Clause 8, they made the winding up of an estate a matter of endless difficulty and complication. This clause made the unfortunate person who received a legacy from a large estate pay a high duty, whereas the man who succeeded to a small estate had to pay a small duty. As the Amendment would make the burden fall where the advantage was to be gained, and where they could calculate the ability to bear it, he considered that it would to a great extent improve the Bill.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) said, he desired to support the Amendment, as he thought it would press unfairly on the children of the men who had large estates. It would be a great hardship to people who had slender means, and who would feel very severely any increase on the Death Duties. The hon. Member for Hackney had said, the larger the estate the larger the duty should be. He (Mr. Jeffreys), on the contrary, said, the larger the legacy the larger the duty should be. There was every difference between a large estate and a large legacy. As had been pointed out by the late Attorney General (Sir R. Webster) a man might be one of ten children, and his father might have an estate of over £100,000. He, receiving one-tenth of that, would have to pay more on account of his father having had £100,000 than would the man who received £10,000 from a father having a smaller estate. He (Mr. Jeffreys) had been the first to submit this argument to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the instance he had chosen being that of a man who, with six children, left £50,000 to one, and £10,000 each to the other five. Each of the five would have to pay a larger duty than would an only son, who received £10,000 as representing the whole of his father's estate. Such a state of things was most unfair, and the more the country knew of it the more they would be inclined to think that it pressed hardly on members of large families who inherited small amounts, although the testator might have had an estate of over £100,000. Therein laid the kernel of the question, that if there was to be graduation of the Death Duties, the man who inherited, or succeeded, to the large estate should pay the increased duty. He did not think that would be half as unpopular as the proposal in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that unless these Death Duties were raised there would be a great deficit, and that would cause the present Legacy Duty to be increased, especially on small legacies. He objected to that portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, because whenever the right hon. Gentleman wished to answer any of their questions or arguments he at once appealed to the small taxpayers, and said—"If you wish to raise more money, you will have either to increase the Death Duties or the Income Tax on the small owners." Why should that be? If there was a certain amount of money to be collected and a certain amount of property to be taxed, it came to the same amount whether they taxed the large or the small property. But the right hon. Gentleman's statement was only an appeal to the constituencies—a kind of threat to the small proprietors, that if he were defeated in this he would have to impose a largely-increased tax on these people. He would have to do nothing of the sort, because for years Governments had gone on levying the taxes on large estates, and there was no chance of the country becoming insolvent. It was a most unfair argument for the right hon. Gentleman to say that these extra duties were put on the moneyed classes of the country to raise a fund for the Navy. If they were put on for that purpose they would only be levied during the present financial year and then taken off again. He was certain, however, that once these Death Duties were put on, they would never be taken off—at any rate, not during the term of Office of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Many people would not grumble to have to pay for the Navy by an increased Income Tax. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had asked, "Where are you going to get your money?" It was not for him (Mr. Jeffreys) to advise the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he could tell the right hon. Gentleman that he would himself be willing, much as he disliked the Income Tax, to pay an extra amount in that way if he knew that the money went for the Navy. But why he objected to the new Death Duties was because he was sure, from the manner in which they were imposed, that they would never be taken off again, and because they would be an immense burden to the real estate of the country. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if the Opposition had to raise money for the Navy they would do it by borrowing. Well, every prudent man avoided borrowing as much as he could; but notwithstanding what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, the effect of these Death Duties would be that many landowners would have to increase their mortgages to pay the charges. If an estate passed through several hands during a short term of years it might be burdened with heavy charges, whereas in the case of an estate left to an infant it might be 70 or 80 years before the tax had to be paid a second time. He held, therefore, that Death Duties were most unequally levied. If there was to be any justice at all in them they ought to be levied in such a way as to prevent estates being saddled with enormous debts which would become almost unbearable in the course of time. He was sure a tax must be excessive and oppressive if the first thing people did was to try and find some way of evading it. And what was the case at present? Everybody who had to face this increased Death Duty began to think of how he could possibly avoid it. It was a common subject of discussion outside the House how a man could best transfer his property to his children so as to avoid the increased Death Duties of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That was proof positive that the duties must be excessive. He sincerely trusted that they would never come to such a state of things in the country, through the oppressive burden of taxation, that people would endeavour to conceal the amount of their wealth so as to defraud the country of its just due of taxation. Every Member of the House was aware that most people out-of-doors just now were discussing with their lawyers how they could dispose of their property so as to avoid the immensely increased duties that would be levied under the Bill if it became law. He maintained that the tax would be oppressive, and he only hoped that even at this late hour some impression might be made on the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that he might be inclined to levy the duty not on the estate that the dead man left, but on that portion that a man succeeded to or inherited.

*Mr. BUTCHER (York) said, he had listened with some interest to the answer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the late Attorney General. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman pointed to the result that would follow the carrying of the Amendment. He endeavoured to terrify the House by pointing to the awful character of those results. But if the results were such as the right hon. Gentleman anticipated it would be no answer to the Amendment. It was no answer to say, "I will impose an unjust tax because I cannot see how to get money otherwise"—and that was the substance of the reply the right hon. Gentleman gave. What were the facts with regard to the result which the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated? As he (Mr. Butcher) understood the point of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight, it was this—"Keep the existing Probate Duty and Account Duty as they are, and, if necessary, have a duty on real property of the nature of the Probate and Account Duty; but if you want an increased duty, then have a graduated duty in the nature of the Legacy and Succession Duty, graduated according to the amount that the successor gets." How did the Chancellor of the Exchequer meet that? He represented that the object of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight was to abolish the Probate and Account Duties altogether, and the right hon. Gentleman went on to draw the terrible picture of the loss to the Revenue of £6,000,000. Such a circumstance would be most disastrous, but he denied that such a result would follow directly or indirectly from the proposal of the late Attorney General. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had put an imaginary and absurd Budget into the hands of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and had produced from that, no doubt, very absurd results. As regarded the general question of graduation, he (Mr. Butcher) looked with no objection upon graduation as a general principle. On the contrary, he thought it was a most reasonable proposal that those who got large sums of money from a dead person, or under settlement, should pay a larger sum by way of duty than those who received smaller sums. But the Bill omitted from consideration altogether what a man received by will or by settlement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer took an artificially aggregated fund, and assessed duty upon it; but how did he make that duty payable? Not out of the artificially aggregated fund, but out of the smaller sum the successor received. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had invented an artificial argument to justify that. He said the duty was not one paid by the successor, but was really a debt due to the State. What did it matter what name it received? By whatever name it was called, it came out of the interest of the successor. Take even the interest a man received under a will. In that case, under Clause 12, the duty paid was recoverable from the successor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to think it was not entirely defensible, and he intimated somewhat broadly he was prepared to throw the proposal aside when they came to Clause 12, but that was not the only section which threw the incidence of the duty upon the successor, because under Clause 7 beneficiaries under a settlement were bound to pay the duty, and would have to pay it out of the money they received. They had this absurd result. Duty was assessed on a fund which bore no relation to what a man got, and it was paid out of a fund which bore no relation to the fund upon which it was assessed. He asked the Committee to say that that was a proposal which was wrong in principle, and which would be unjust in operation. The Leader of the House had referred, in support of his proposals, to certain recent legislation in the Colonies which bore on the Death Duties. He had not been able to find a single instance in support of the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but, on the other hand, he had found a colonial model of legislation which was against the right hon. Gentleman—the South Australian Act. In that Act the very principle for which the Opposition were contending was carried out to the letter, as the duty was charged upon what a man succeeded to and not upon what was left. In that case what was left by will was distinguished from what was left by settlement. The total amount received by the successor was ascertained and the duty was levied on that. As regarded the question of principle, they had John Stuart Mill and they had the Australian precedents with them. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight gave some instances of the unjust effect the Bill would have if passed in its present form, and he would give one or two further instances. If the Bill passed as it stood, when a man died the successor would pay an increased duty upon what he got under the will or settlement because other persons unconnected with him got benefit under other wills or settlements. Suppose a man died leaving by his will, or having settled by deed upon his widow his whole fortune of £5,000. Under the scheme of the Bill she would, if there were no other settlement, pay £150. But suppose a stranger settled £100,000 on the deceased for his life and left it after the death of the deceased to the son, then the widow's £5,000 was aggregated with this £100,000 in which she had no interest, and the duty was levied upon that aggregated amount, so that instead of paying £150 she paid at the rate of 6 per cent., or a sum of £300. In other words, because a stranger had been liberal to a son of the deceased man, therefore the widow had to pay double the amount of duty she would otherwise have to pay. That was one of the anomalies that would be removed if the Amendment were carried. Let him give one other illustration. Under the Bill a person who took a small benefit under the will of a dead man would pay an increased duty because other property in which the dead man had no interest whatsoever went to someone else. Supposing a man left £5,000 to his widow, and had no other property, under the scheme of the Bill the widow would, if there were no other settlement, pay 3 per cent., or £150. But supposing that a stranger in blood altogether, who had nothing to do with the dead man, had settled £100,000 upon someone else during the life of the deceased, and that property changed hands on the death of the deceased, and went over to the son, then the widow paid 6 per cent., or £300. So that they had the astounding result that, although the dead man had no fraction of interest whatever in this property, because on his death it went to the son, therefore the widow had to pay double the duty she would otherwise have to pay. That was the result of the scheme embodied in the Bill. He asked the Committee to say that this proposal which they now sought to amend was unjust in principle, that it would have a most inequitable operation in practice, and that it would increase the many anomalies which were already incident to the levying of the Death Duties. The object of the Amendment was to remove some, at any rate, of these anomalies, to prevent some of these injustices, and to remove some of the inequitable results that the Bill would have, and for these reasons he asked the Committee to think long before they sanctioned this principle.

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, it was rather remarkable that although this Debate had proceeded now for five hours——[*Ironical Ministerial cheers.*] Did hon. Members think that in regard to so complete a change as was about to be made in the whole law and practice governing the devolution of estates they should not have a Debate of even five hours? During that Debate they had had no independent support of the principle proposed by the Government from any hon. Member of this House except the hon. Member for North Somerset. There had only been two other speeches made from the other side of the House in favour of this change, one by its putative father the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the other by the hon. Member for South Hackney, who spoke with all the interest and affection of the real parent and whose influence in prompting this change had been already acknowledged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He should not complain of that if the two speeches they had heard really dealt with the arguments brought forward by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight. The hon. Member who cheered just now the idea that they should have got through this Debate with a few sentences of protest had hardly considered, after all, that this change which they proposed to drive through Committee by the votes of the majority was one which would be felt henceforth by every person who left property throughout the whole of the Kingdom. They had a right to expect from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he should give them some argument. The right hon. Gentleman was an adept in making debating points; he was well able in debate to meet any Member of this House, and what they wanted was some reply on the hard cases which had been instanced as likely to occur under the Bill. It was not enough for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say with a wave of the hand that they could shunt this from one person to another. They wanted to know whether that was a just position. They wanted men of the calibre of the Solicitor General—who had not even taken a note whilst the last speaker was instancing these hard cases—to deal with the difficulties which had been pointed out. It was no argument for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with this question as if it applied only to millionaires. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have got millionaires on the brain—a sort of plutocratic delirium. It was no argument for the Government to ignore the difficulties of settlement. The right hon. Gentleman told them that Clauses 12 and 7 could be discussed when they arrived at them, and that there was nothing which had been said by the Member for the Isle of Wight which had anything to do with Clause 1 as it stood. It was all very well to say, as had been said by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Member for South Hackney, that under Clause 1 a man could make what disposition he pleased. That was an absolutely erroneous statement. It was impossible for a man to make what disposition he pleased so long as they mixed up settled and unsettled property in regard to this tax. They did not, as had been said by the Member for South Hackney, leave it to the man to decide. A man could not decide so long as property devolved under settlement, as was mostly the case at present. Supposing they had got a man succeeding to landed property of £60,000 or £80,000 and whatever was left in the way of personalty went to the other children. If there was £20,000 to leave among four children and a sum of £60,000 or £80,000 was left to the eldest son, both in settlement, one by marriage and the other by no action of the testator, what power had he of adjusting the duties? How could he decide for himself? In what way was it possible under Clause 1 for a man with settled property to guard his younger children, to whom he was leaving small fortunes, from having out of these small fortunes to pay large sums because of having an elder brother who had come in for the larger share of the property? That man could not decide for himself and provide for his younger children. He could not alienate or sell in many cases; he could not divest himself of settled land, and he was bound to leave a charge very often of 4 or 5 per cent. on those who were already considered an object of charity, because the Government had already stepped in and declared they were not persons from whom Income Tax could well be levied. The hon. Member for South Hackney failed altogether to make out any case for charging this duty on the principal value. The figures given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the effect of this duty on agricultural land were proved in the course of the Second Reading Debate to be erroneous, while those which had been quoted by the right hon. Gentleman that day were utterly unreliable and not supported by a single argument. He confessed to great disappointment at the manner in which the Government had met the Amendment. The Committee had a right to ask that the Government should apply their minds to the obvious difficulties which arose in connection with the Bill, and he was quite certain that no Member of the Government would rise to justify the charges which were put upon small estates by the clause. They were not in this case arguing against the principle of graduation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made this a question not of graduation, but of the incidence of the duty on the smaller estates, and the Opposition now wished to protest against the creation of a false *corpus* as the basis of excessive and inequitable taxation. He had endeavoured to put before the Leader of the House a plan of which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take notice, and he would ask him to consider whether his action in pressing for the rejection of the Amendment would not largely increase the tendencies to evade the duty? He only wished he was at liberty to describe to the Chancellor of the Exchequer some of the manœuvres which were being executed in order to evade the clause. He could give an instance in which a man had already transferred a large property to his son in return for an annuity, and in other cases men who had been making allowances to their sons had transferred to them the principal. [*Laughter.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer laughed, but it would not be a laughing matter for the Exchequer. This was a really serious matter, and he would urge the right hon. Gentleman not to shut his eyes to the facts or to ignore the arguments which had been placed before him. He could only, in conclusion, express his firm belief that so far from causing an increase of revenue the clause would lead to an enormous reduction in the prosperity of the agricultural districts, and would perpetuate and increase the inequalities between realty and personalty.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, he proposed to occupy the attention of the Committee for some little time, partly because the importance of the subject justified it and partly because he had to submit some considerations which so far had received no attention. He occupied a rather unfortunate and peculiar position. He approved the principle of most of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman, but he could not agree with the arguments adduced in support of them. That might be perhaps a perfectly insignificant circumstance, but was one right in acquiescing in a thing without examining the arguments on which the conclusion was arrived at? It certainly ought not to be done in this case. They were dealing with a Budget which might fairly be described as historical, and it involved the application of new principles to taxation. When they remembered the great Budgets of 1841, 1853, and 1860, he thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well feel proud at having his Budget raised to the historic rank. But as they were taking a new departure, it wase xtremely desirable that they should completely understand upon what reasoning these proposals were based, and ascertain their justification not only in vindication of their own action, but in view of the fact that what they did now would be done again in the future. Now, he had entirely failed to find the moral and ethical basis of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. They had been told it was desirable and essential that taxation should be in proportion to the payment to the receiver. He could not accept the word "receiver"; it would be too limited an application. The recipients of bounty would in future be taxed as members of the community in respect of what they enjoyed, and it was extremely doubtful whether they should receive an additional burden merely because it was convenient at the moment that they should do so. The hon. and gallant Member for one of the divisions of Essex, in a speech the arrangement of which he admired exceedingly, had pointed out that there was some disposition to accept arbitrary propositions as determining the basis of taxation. What was the history of the tax upon alienation? Hon. Members must know that they could not finally settle this matter by saying that here was an existing tax and that consequently it was a good one. They should surely have respect to the position which a tax had in relation to other taxes. It was extremely doubtful whether this tax on alienation could be justified at all. The Chancellor of the Exchequer justified the tax as one that was analogous to the Probate Duty. The State at present demanded a toll because it guaranteed the validity of a gift, and the State was therefore justified in intercepting a portion in the passage from the dead to the living man. The tax was an arbitrary one in exactly the same way as the tolls were arbitrary that were levied upon traffic passing from one station to another where the passengers made a change. It was no doubt an extremely convenient course to levy a tax which should be payable upon the passing of property from a dead to a living man, but it rested upon convenience only, and that was no ground whatever for argument in favour of taxation. This alienation tax was therefore convenient in the eyes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose idea was that, so long as he got a certain amount of money, it did not very much matter by what means he got it; and it was not only a very convenient but a very productive tax. When they abandoned the notion that these taxes were defensible as tolls on passing goods, the time would also come when they would abandon tolls on the passage of property from the dead to the living. He ventured to say that if they really wished to discover a moral basis for this or any other system of taxation, they must consider that they were dealing with living members of a living community, and must look at them and consider how they were taxed. They must take a larger contribution from persons of large means. He was not now going into this at length, because practically it had been decided in the discussion in the Committee. He thought the Member for the Isle of Thanet was the only Member who had raised a voice against it. They had to regard this strictly as a problem of taxation. The true way of levying the cost of national government and national action from the members of the community would be to tax them from time to time, and, if possible, from day to day, according to a graduated scale in accordance with the totality of their powers. But it was difficult to establish such a theoretically perfect scheme of taxation as that, and to carry it into operation from year to year. The direct taxation which we did impose upon the living was the Income Tax, and it was impossible to have a graduated Income Tax which should be collected with convenience and certainty. The tax in its present form involved the necessity of collecting it at the same rate, whatever might be the wealth of those on whose incomes it was levied. That was a necessity of the case, and therefore the system of direct taxation which we could apply to the living was one under which the richer members of the community were not taxed to the degree up to which they ought to be taxed. The rich man who died was, therefore, in debt to the State. There was an accumulated deficiency in his contributions to direct taxation, and the simple defence of the Probate Duty—or Estate Duty, as it was in future to be called—was this, that it was a debt due from the estate of the deceased to the State in consequence of the deficiency of his contributions during his life. If once people got hold of that luminous idea their minds would be relieved of a great many difficulties. Tenants for life, for example, would realise that a growing debt was being run up against them, and that they must save in order that it might be paid when they died without injury to their successors. It should be understood that a man had no more to leave to his successors than the residue of his property after payment of the duty. It was idle to say that the legatee paid. The duty was a debt which must be paid out of the dead man's effects before they could be distributed. In future, it was to be hoped that men would bear in mind the necessity of providing for the payment of this debt, just as they were supposed to provide for the discharge of other just obligations. If they could view the Probate Duty as a debt people would get rid of the notion that it was a toll upon the testamentary disposition of property, and similar notions derived from imperfectly developed communities like Scotland. It was of the highest importance that they should have a true knowledge of the basis upon which this tax rested. If they understood how it was justified they would also understand its limitations, and it would no longer be viewed as a convenient tax from which largely varying sums could be obtained at different times by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If the tax were looked upon as a tax in payment of arrears accumulated during life much of the aversion caused by it would disappear.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR** (Manchester, E.): I have listened, as I confess I always do listen, with very great interest to the speech of my right hon. Friend, who seems to me to never speak with more effect or power than when he finds himself at loggerheads with his Party or when he intends to support a proposal, as on the present occasion, and cast his vote along with the Government. His arguments, I must say, this evening were of a kind which we have not yet heard, and were entirely inconsistent with the course taken from the beginning by the Government. I do not wish to dwell at any length upon his arguments, because, owing to the understanding that has been come to, the time for discussing this question is running very short, and I have to deal with important arguments that have been advanced by those Members who are the chief supporters of the Bill. It appears to me, however, that he has not carried out his arguments to a logical conclusion with the views that he so strongly expressed upon the proposed Death Duties. Shortly, his opinion, I think, may be stated to be that these Death Duties are in the nature of a slowly accruing debt to the State, which arises from the fact that during life the owner of the estate had not contributed enough towards the Imperial taxation of the country, and that therefore this deficit should be made up out of his property that remained at his death. But I would ask my right hon. Friend to notice that the amount that a man should pay does not depend upon the amount of the property he leaves, but upon the length of time that he had the good fortune to enjoy it. A man who came into a million of money at 45 years of age and died at 50 owes evidently a very small sum to the State. Yet the Government comes down upon his unfortunate heir, who will have to pay

8 per cent. For my own part, I cannot see the justice of such a course. I can quite understand his view that a person who is possessed of a very large property should pay more than a man who has only a very small property. Unfortunately, the extra sum that the former should contribute cannot be extracted from him by means of the Income Tax alone, because there are technical difficulties which prevent a graduated scale of taxation being applied to that form of tax. But if, on the other hand, he were to contribute in proportion to the length of time that the individual enjoyed the estate, I think the present proposal would not answer the purpose, and that the difficulty could be met by a fairly arranged Income Tax based upon a differential scale. If this be so, then a poor man who has enjoyed but a small property, but has enjoyed it for a long time, ought to pay more than a rich man who has only enjoyed his fortune for a short time. The principle pursued in this matter by the Government, so far as I can understand it, has not been embodied in what may be considered as an equitable scheme. I have but little hopes of converting my right hon. Friend, but I do hope that when he records his vote to-night he will feel that though he is with the Government he is not of them. I pass now to consider the arguments which have been put forward by the more enthusiastic supporters of the proposal. In the first place, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—who already, I may say, seems to regard his own utterances on the question as classical expositions which may be quoted by any Member of this House when referring to the subject with the greatest safety—gave us a considerable number of arguments, all of which were very naturally strongly in support of the proposal; but it is only in reference to one or two that I think it will be necessary for me to ask for your attention now. The right hon. Gentleman said, "If you carry out your present Amendment it will be impossible to find the money that is necessary." I do not doubt for a moment that if the Amendment is carried a difference will be felt by the Government. But let me point out that in that case it would be the business of the Government to fill up the gap in the Exchequer receipts by some other means. At any rate, it would not be our business to take any steps in the matter. We all of us admit that if this Amendment were accepted the calculations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer made upon this source of revenue would be upset. But if that were an argument of real weight no Budget would ever be passed with Amendments at all. The Budget comes before this House year after year as the organised machinery for meeting the indebtedness of the State. Either the Chancellor of the Exchequer must put these things right, or give way to persons who will put them right; and, if the difficulty reach a serious crisis, such persons may possibly be found.

Sir W. HARCOURT: That is a reason why I do not accept the Amendment.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: But it is no reason why we should accept a proposition of the Budget as a just proposition. Everybody will have felt that the defence of the Government proposals, not only in this but in other respects, is of a very technical character. It has been pointed out by my hon. and learned Friend in his very able speech that, by Clause 12 of this Bill, the Government have provided that the duty paid by the individual legatee should be proportioned, not to the amount received by him, but to the amount of the estate from which the legacy is derived. What was the reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? It was that Clause 12 had very little to do with the financial scheme of the measure, that it was to be taken or to be left, and whether it was taken or left, the Government at all events would get the money. Well, that is not the way a Chancellor of the Exchequer should deal with a great financial problem. The right hon. Gentleman does not appear before us as an official concerned with no other duty than that of extracting from the taxpayers a sufficient amount of money to meet the national obligations. He comes before us, or he ought to come before us, as a statesman, and a statesman who lays before us proposals for collecting the money necessary to meet the national obligations in a manner fair and equitable to every class concerned. But for the right hon.

Gentleman to say, "I, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, care nothing at all for Clause 12; it is in my Bill which you have read a second time; take it or leave it; my money in either case is secure," is, I venture to say, to adopt a policy never adopted before by any Chancellor of the Exchequer, and unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman, both in his capacity of Chancellor of the Exchequer and in his capacity of Leader of the House. Clause 12 is an integral part of the measure as proposed by the Government; we cannot regard Clause 1 irrespectively and independently of Clause 12; it must be interpreted by Clause 12. I have no time to go into the details of the question; but I am in entire agreement with the hon. and learned Member for Hackney, who said in his speech that Clause 12 was intended to protect the residuary legatee, for the residuary legatee, without Clause 12, might find himself in the unhappy position of being saddled with the whole of this progressive tax, all the other beneficiaries escaping without any special taxation at all. I entirely agree with him; it would be unjust to the residuary legatee; but suppose you abolish Clause 12 and throw upon the residuary legatee the whole weight of this tax, is it not obvious you would commit an injustice precisely similar to that which we complain of in the whole scheme of Government taxation? What is our complaint of the scheme of Government taxation? It is that you tax a man not upon what he has, but on what somebody else had who left him the property. That injustice would not be removed by abolishing Clause 12. Cut out Clause 12 if you will, and you may remove this particular injustice from other legatees, but it only means that this particular legatee will be taxed not upon what he receives, but upon the magnitude of the property from which he receives it. This is what we complain of; this is the fundamental injustice lying at the root of all the Government proposals; and it would not be removed by abolishing Clause 12, just as it is not mitigated by leaving Clause 12 in the Bill. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Courtney) who has just sat down and the hon. Member for Hackney have both announced that the occasion of the present Budget is one upon which we ought to revise from its very basis our whole system of the Death Duties upon ethical and moral grounds. I entirely agree; but we should be content to go on with the old system until some reconstruction is initiated; and what I complain of in the Government proposals is this—having taken in hand to equalise the Death Duties, having taken in hand the gigantic task of putting in order the accumulated anomalies of half a century, they have not attempted to go to the root of the matter; they have not attempted to deal with it on fundamental principles; they have not attempted to make their proposals square with the eternal principles of justice. Not one word has fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer or from the hon. Member for Hackney to make me believe that they have in any respect attempted to frame these new duties upon a plan which will stand criticism, going to the root of the matter, upon principles which are fair and which may make them a permanent subject of taxation. I do not mean to dwell upon them now; but, if Death Duties are to be passed in the shape proposed now by the Government, I cannot believe they would be permanent. I do not say we should have to go back on all the changes they have proposed; but it would come before every Government as a practical matter to be considered whether they would not revise the whole system which the Government had adopted. That is the melancholy state to which we should come. If the Government think they are strong enough to carry a great alteration of the Death Duties, they ought to see that it is a great reform. The Government have not taken the trouble to do that; they have not gone to the root of the matter; and the result of that *laches* on their part will be that the fabric that they are so elaborately and laboriously constructing will have to be pulled down by their successors, and reconstructed upon some more equitable plan more in consonance with the necessary and elementary principles of justice. Sir, I have already dealt with my right hon. Friend's ethical defence of the Budget. Let me turn to the ethical defence given by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite. What is it he founded himself upon? He founded himself on certain metaphysical principles with regard to property which, I will venture to say, have no basis in reason, and no justification beyond the speculations of certain 18th century legislators.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Hear, hear!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman based himself upon *Blackstone.* I believe the right hon. Gentleman is, above all things, an expert in International Law; and I have noticed that these experts in International Law are more confused with regard to first principles than anyone else. What is it that these unfortunate experts in International Law are driven to? It is what is called "the law of nature."

SIR W. HARCOURT: The Law of Nations.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The basis for them of the Law of Nations is what they call the law of nature—a metaphysical conception, partly of antiquity and partly of the 18th century. When the right hon. Gentleman had the courage to lay down in this House the principle that when a man dies his whole property belongs to the State, and that after the State has extracted from that property all that seems good to it, then the heirs ought to be glad to have any fragments that remain, he was basing his speculations, not upon history, and not upon law, but upon the false metaphysics of the law of nature. Perhaps, in one sense, I am doing the right hon. Gentleman an injustice; because, while he depended upon the law of nature in his Second Reading speech, in his speech to-night he depended on the feudal law. We have the extraordinary spectacle of a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer driven out of the law of nature, and obliged to come to this House to tell us that this is a good old feudal Budget. I listened with intense enjoyment the other night to the right hon. Gentleman when he was driven to quoting Mr. Pitt against Mr. Fox; but I certainly did not look forward to the further satisfaction of hearing him three nights later tell us that his Budget was not based upon modern principles of legislation, but that it had its roots in the feudal system. Sir, is not there an extraordinary absurdity in supporting the proposition, partly defended by the right hon. Gentleman himself on the ground, as I understand, explicitly stated by the hon. and learned Member for Hackney, that these duties are the price paid by the individual for the right of disposing of his property? That is a grotesque contention. According to the universal tradition of civilised society, property is the property of the individual, and after his death of the family who succeed him. Different nations have given different degrees of liberty of bequest to the individual; but the theory of all nations through civilised time has been, as my right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London has pointed out, that property is not the property of the State, but of the individual and of the family to which he belongs. The idea that it rests with the State to take as much of the property as seems good to it without being guilty of any injustice is a gross innovation, not justified even by the law of nature or by the feudal system.

*MR. MOULTON: The right hon. Gentleman misrepresents me. I neither used the word "price" nor did I say that the State had the right to take any capricious portion of the whole for the privilege of alienation. I said it was "toll" paid. That is the word I adhere to.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am aware that the hon. and learned Gentleman used the word "toll." But I thought that he laid down the principle that the right to dispose of property was something which had been purchased from the State; and that the amount of the duty which was to be exacted from the property was, as it were, a preliminary debit due to the State before anyone took anything. Of course that is true, legally and technically. But do not let us confuse the technical with the moral aspect of the question. Morally, the property belongs to the individual, and after him to his family and successors. That has been the universal practice of civilised society. What nations have done in limiting the bequest has been to prevent a man from leaving his property out of his family. So far from denying the right to bequeath to the family, they have said that the property belongs to the family so much that it may not be left away from it. For either the hon. and learned Gentleman or the Chancellor of the Exchequer to come here and assert that property, after the death of the owner, is at large, and belongs to the State, until the State chooses to give some fraction of it back to the heirs, is to assert that which has no foundation in practice, in law, in justice, or in equity. If we are to give up that principle we are driven back on the principle for which my hon. and learned Friend contended in the Amendment; it is simply that we should exact from each member of the community a tax which would involve an equal sacrifice in every case. Can it be pretended by any defender of the Government's proposals that they will carry out that object? My hon. and learned Friend gave one or two cases. Have they been answered? Has there been any pretence of answering them? The hon. and learned Member for Hackney made a pretence of answering one of the strongest of the cases. It was that of a man who enjoys a life interest in £50,000, settled at his demise upon his eldest son, and who has two younger sons, to whom he can leave £5,000 each—money which he has in his absolute gift. Under the Bill of the Government, on the death of that man the £5,000 left to each of the younger sons would be taxed, not in proportion to the amount they received, but in proportion to the total £60,000 which has passed upon the death of the testator. That is obviously unjust. He said these two sons were damaged in one sense by the fact that £50,000 passes to the elder brother; but, on the other hand, he said if there were no £50,000, and if the £10,000 had to be divided among the three brothers, how much worse off would they all be! But supposing that £50,000 were £100,000, £200,000, or £1,000,000, the unfortunate recipients of £5,000 would be mulct in the 4 per cent., 6 per cent., or 8 per cent. duty, while if the £60,000 were reduced to £10,000 they would hardly be mulct at all. That inequality existing, I want to know upon what principles is it defensible. If the £50,000, the £100,000, or the £1,000,000 were settled away upon a stranger, the two sons would be taxed at the rate of 8 per cent. How are you going to justify that?

**Mr. MOULTON** said, if the right hon. Gentleman would look at the Bill he would find that it was not so.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: The smallest annuity is included in the table. Will the hon. and learned Member deny that any annuity would be taxed on the higher rate? I may take it, therefore, that even in the opinion of the most strenuous defenders, or, as some almost suspect, the authors of the Bill, this monstrous and obvious injustice would be found in the Bill.

***Mr. MOULTON** said, if the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the clause inserted for that particular purpose, he would find that his interpretation of the Bill was still wrong.

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: As I read the Bill—I was going to say of the hon. and learned Gentleman—but of the Government, if any benefit is reserved at all, the whole property comes in, and therefore the smallest annuity would drag in the whole of the property to determine the succession of the unfortunate persons whose condition I have described. That is an indefensible proposal. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us that he requires these unjust measures in order to collect sufficient money for the State well and good, but he should not come down to this House and pose as the heaven-sent Minister of Finance, who is at last going to reduce the chaos of the Death Duties into order—to introduce justice where injustice has hitherto reigned. We have a right to ask him that the principles upon which this measure is framed shall stand examination; but we have seen that, whatever else may follow, this Budget cannot pretend to be the equitable adjustment of our Death Duties, which we were led upon the Second Reading to suppose would follow from the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 231; Noes 199.—(Division List, No. 63.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolution [25th May] reported.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1894-5 (SECOND VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

"That a sum, not exceeding £4,897,350, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charges for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895." [See page 1286.]

### Importation of Canadian Cattle.

**Mr. W. LONG** (Liverpool, West Derby) said, he very much regretted the absence of his right hon. Friend the Member for the Sleaford Division (Mr. Chaplin), who had put a Notice on the Paper indicating his intention of calling attention to the importation of Canadian cattle. In consequence of his unavoidable absence, his right hon. Friend had asked him to draw attention to the position in which the question stood. Nobody in the House was more conversant with the question than his right hon. Friend, and his absence was to be regretted, because had he been present he would have brought to the consideration of the question not only the charms of his personal presence but the force of his personal experience. The question was one of very pressing importance, and he thought that those who were interested in agricultural questions were justified in believing that it was necessary to call the attention of the House to it. He hoped that the President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Gardner) would accept from him the declaration that in raising the question he was animated by no desire whatever to impugn the right hon. Gentleman's action since he had occupied his present official position. On the contrary, he believed the right hon. Gentleman had uniformly done his best to protect agricultural interests. At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman was necessarily exposed to very great pressure to withdraw what some people naturally regarded as objectionable restrictions, and the agricultural Members on the Opposition side of the House wished to give the right hon. Gentleman an assurance that they were anxious to support him, not in excluding the importation of cattle where there was no suspicion of disease, but in securing to the herds of this country that immunity from disease which could only be secured by preventing the importation of cattle from countries where any suspicion of disease existed. The justification for the action which he (Mr. Long) was taking was to be found in a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Gardner) on the 23rd of April last, in reply to a question. The right hon. Gentleman then stated that he proposed to institute an examination which would not be of a protracted character, and that if it had certain results he would remove the restrictions. The contention he (Mr. Long) submitted to the House was that pleuro - pneumonia was a disease of so peculiar a character and was so difficult of detection, besides being frequently so long latent in an animal, that it was impossible to remove the restrictions without running some risk of having an importation of the disease into this country. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that since last June there had been three or four cases of this disease, that the difficulty of detection was extremely great, and that the disease was in Canada.

**Mr. H. GARDNER** was understood to dissent.

**Mr. W. LONG** said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would, at all events, admit that his Department had stated that the disease was in Canada. If it were the case that the authorities in Canada prevented animals which had a suspicious appearance from being sent across, and if it was the case that it was very difficult to detect the disease in the living animal, he thought it would be admitted that the mere fact that cases had been discovered recently rendered the removal of the existing restrictions unjustifiable. In a letter from the Department of Agriculture to the Secretary for the Colonies on the 15th of August, 1893, the following statement occurred :—

> "There is abundant evidence that contagious pleuro-pneumonia may remain dormant during a lengthened period, and it was stated in the evidence given to the Departmental Committee in 1888 that cases had been known of the development of the disease after no less a period than 15 months."

Hon. Members knew that there was recently in the Isle of Thanet a case of pleuro-pneumonia which had been dormant since last August. The right hon. Gentleman had denied that he had himself expressed the opinion that pleuro-pneumonia was still in Canada. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was reported in the *Parliamentary Debates* of August 3, 1893, to have said—

> We agree that there is a disease in Canada. Canadians say that it is not contagious pleuro-pneumonia. We say it is."

The right hon. Gentleman had seemed to indicate that under certain circumstances he might be induced to withdraw the existing restrictions. They were anxious not to press him—and he (Mr. Long) was sure he spoke for every agriculturist on that side of the House—for a declaration which, in his opinion, would prejudice his action, but the right hon. Gentleman would admit they were entitled to know now the policy of the Government with regard to this important question. Many agriculturists of the country were compelled to make their arrangements for the year now, and they should know at once whether or not their stock was to be open to the risk of infection. The right hon. Gentleman had been exposed to pressure from quarters which they might have expected to be favourable to British agriculture. A correspondence had taken place between the Colonial Office and the Board of Agriculture, in which the Colonial Office sought to induce the Board to remove the existing restrictions. It was clear from the correspondence that the Secretary of State for the Colonies thought himself justified in attempting to dictate to the Minister for Agriculture what should be the policy of his Department. The right hon. Gentleman, he understood, considered either that there was no risk at all or very small risk of the importation of pleuro-pneumonia from Canada. But the latest information received by his right hon. Friend the Member for Sleaford went to show that Canadians themselves admitted the existence of disease and the risk of infection in some quarters of the Dominion. The desire of the Government was, he understood, that the food supply of this country should be abundant and cheap, but that object would not suffer by carefully restricting the importation of cattle from countries where the disease existed. He believed himself that by insisting on slaughter at the port of debarkation they would do more to cheapen the supply of meat than they would by any other process they could adopt. It was well known that if meat was imported dead or slaughtered at the port of debarkation it must be rapidly got rid of, and sold in the nearest market that offered, and in all probability it was disposed of cheaper than meat imported alive, and kept until it could be got rid of in a market prepared for it. He did not think that any argument could be advanced for this restriction on the sale of cheap food for the people. He quite admitted there should not be any restriction unless they could show there was risk of disease. With regard to Canadian cattle, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford had placed in his hand a copy of a Montreal paper of the 27th of April, in which there was an article on this subject, in the course of which it was stated—

> "It is only a short time since one of our prominent cattle shippers stated to the writer, in the presence of others, that he would undertake to prove there was more disease in Canadian herds than there was in American herds."

That was the opinion of a Canadian writer writing only a few weeks ago, and the right hon. Gentleman would find there were large numbers of people in Canada who candidly admitted that there was this disease, and that there was the greatest difficulty, even with the exercise of every precaution, in preventing an invasion of this disease from their neighbours. In view of this, and having regard to the fact that the breeding, raising and fattening of cattle was almost the only industry which was remunerative now left to the British farmer, the right hon. Gentleman if he were to do anything which would lead to a recurrence in this country of the disease which was so disastrous in days gone by, would be striking a lasting blow at the existence of this great industry, which he was sure the right hon. Gentleman as well as they was anxious to protect and promote. If the right hon. Gentleman did not feel himself to be in a position to give the House an assurance that night that the existing restrictions upon the importation of Canadian cattle would not be removed, he hoped that, in view of the fact that Her Majesty's Government were about to take the whole time of the House, the right hon. Gentleman would undertake that the restrictions should not be removed without the Government giving the House an opportunity of discussing the matter.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden) said, he was sure that the House would agree that the Government had nothing to complain of in the speech to which they had just listened. The hon. Gentleman had spoken, as he always did, with great moderation, and had put his points before the House with great clearness, and he should be the last man to find fault with the hon. Gentleman for taking the opportunity of raising this question, which he, for one, admitted to be of a most important character. He was glad to find that the way in which the hon. Gentleman regarded the matter did not differ in the slightest from the way in which the Government regarded it. They looked upon the administration of these Acts solely from one point, and that was for the protection of the herds of this country from disease. They looked upon this matter from no other point of view whatever. He did not wish to raise any contentious matter, but it had been stated in that House and elsewhere that it was desirable that the Government should adopt a drastic policy in regard to this subject, not for the purpose of keeping out cattle disease, but because harm might come to the farmers of this country by the lowering of the price of meat if cattle were to be imported, otherwise than for slaughter at the ports, from the United States as well as from Canada. That, however, was a position which he altogether repudiated, and which he believed the hon. Gentleman would also repudiate, and, as he had already stated, the sole object of the Government in enforcing these Acts was to prevent the introduction of cattle disease. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the correspondence which had passed between his Department and the Colonial Office. He thought, with all respect to the hon. Gentleman, that he forgot when he alluded to the action of the Colonial Office that Canada was still an important portion of the British Empire, and which, moreover, was represented in the Imperial Parliament by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was, therefore, a most natural and proper action on the part of the Colonial Office to communicate to the Board of Agriculture the views of the Dominion Government on this subject.

MR. W. LONG: The right hon. Gentleman entirely mistakes me. I did not suggest it was not right of the Colonial Department to communicate their views to the Board of Agriculture. What I suggested was that it was highly improper of the Colonial Office to dictate to the Board of Agriculture what should be the policy of that Board with regard to British agriculture. That is a wholly different matter.

*MR. H. GARDNER did not see where the dictation came in. What the hon. Gentleman had most at heart was that there should be no unrestricted importation of Canadian cattle, because he considered there was danger to the herds of this country in consequence. His noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies very properly put before the Board of Agriculture the views of the Dominion Government on the subject, but as at the present moment no action had been taken in regard to the admission of Canadian cattle, he could not see how that communication was, in any sense, to be considered as dictation, nor how the agricultural interests had in any way suffered by that correspondence. The hon. Gentleman in his remarks seemed to think that because there was a case of pleuro-pneumonia found amongst cattle landed at Deptford in last October that therefore the time was too short for them to take off any restrictions in regard to the admission of cattle into this country. The decision which the Minister in charge of this matter had to take was not wholly based upon the fact that cases of disease came into this country, though that was, of course, an important factor. It was necessary for the Minister to take many other factors into consideration as well as the fact of an animal having arrived in this country which was proved to have pleuro-pneumonia. It must be a very conceivable case to the hon. Gentleman that by some accident an animal might come over the borders of the United States. The Canadian Government might subsequently fortify their restrictions against the United States to the satisfaction of the Government of this country; and many facts might come to light which might cause the Minister in charge of the Board of Agriculture to be perfectly satisfied that there was absolutely no danger of the introduction of disease at all, in spite of the fact that some months before an isolated case of disease might have occurred. Again, there might be no cases of diseased cattle in Canada, and yet the information in his possession might be such that the Minister would think it his duty to withdraw the privilege of free entrance. He could assure the hon. Gentleman and the House that in taking any action he had taken on the subject his action had not been based solely upon the consideration of whether disease came in or whether it did not come in; but it was taken upon all the circumstances as known to him. He must say that, in regard to any decision he might have to take, he was not in a position at the present moment to make any definite promise on the subject. The hon. Gentleman knew as well as he did that in the administration of these Acts they could not lay down what was going to happen possibly six months, or it might be a year, hence; but that they must consider the whole of the circumstances from time to time, and take their decision upon them. With regard to the question of cheap food, he agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the prohibition of the importation of these store cattle would probably not raise the price of meat one farthing; but, on the other hand, it might raise the price of store cattle, and there were many dealers and graziers who, when the price of stock was rising, as it was at the present moment, were very anxious that their views should be considered, and, though they might not be authorities on the agricultural interests of the country, they were still gentlemen whose views ought to be taken into consideration. He could promise the hon. Gentleman one thing, and that was, that the policy of the Government on this subject was to administer this law in such a way as to protect the agricultural interest from any danger of disease; and as long as he remained at the Board of Agriculture, if there was any doubt as to disease being imported into this country, he should always act in favour of the home country in preference to any other.

COLONEL GUNTER (York, W.R., Barkstone Ash) said, he rose to support the Minister for Agriculture. Representing as he did a large agricultural district of Yorkshire, where cattle were largely bred, he would like to say there was one point which had not been mentioned and which was this. Not only might cattle from Canada bring disease into this country, but disease might be propagated on board the ships in which they were sent. The very circumstances of the case—the number of cattle which were huddled together, the atmosphere they breathed, and the state they were in when landed at the ports, must engender fever, and fever was the prelude of pneumonia. It was well-known that pneumonia in the human being was contagious, and in cattle why should it not also be? In 1890, 8,500 cattle died and were thrown overboard on their way from Canada and America to this country. They might imagine, therefore, the state of the cattle when landed at the various ports. They were all in favour of having fat cattle brought over and enabling poor people to get meat at as reasonable a price as they could, but what they did object to was store stock being brought over and allowed to go about this country. Why should they run this risk? Their herds and flocks were clear of disease, and why should they run the risk of having disease disseminated by cattle being brought over? If they took the statistics of the meat supply of England and Wales they would find that 70 per cent. of the cattle were furnished from this country, leaving 30 per cent. which were imported, of which only 10 per cent. were landed at the ports in a healthy state, and out of that number scarcely 1 per cent. were sent to the country. But it was this 1 per cent. they were afraid of. Up to February, 1892, all along the eastern portions of France foot-and-mouth disease raged, but it never entered France owing to the Regulations enforced in that country. In February, 1892, the Regulations were taken off, and in a very short time 404 districts in that country were impregnated with the disease and 43,000 animals were affected. Fancy the expense to the country in stamping that out! Take the last outbreak in Scotland. In 1890 there were 79 cases from one cargo of Canadian cattle, and it cost something like £1,000 or more to stamp it out. What they wanted was to keep disease away, and to protect the country and the farmers from having all their markets stopped, and inconvenience and cost thus entailed in stamping out disease. He felt sure the Minister for Agriculture would do his very best to keep disease out of the country.

*SIR J. LENG (Dundee) observed that in Scotland, as in England, there was great complaint of agricultural depression, but a great majority of the agriculturists in Scotland looked to the importation of Canadian store cattle as a means of meeting that depression. They knew by experience that these cattle were worth from £4 to £5 per head to them. In Aberdeenshire alone that represented £80,000 per annum, distributed chiefly among the tenant farmers. They benefited to that extent; the landed proprietors benefited to that extent, and it was not from Scotland that any appeal came for the imposition of these restrictions. But it must not be supposed that the Scottish farmers were more anxious for the importation of disease than the English farmers. They had had experience of cattle disease as well as the English farmers. In no part of the Kingdom, for instance, was rinderpest more severe and destructive than it was in the counties with which he was connected; and if the agriculturists of Scotland believed—as they did not believe—that the removal of these restrictions would tend to promote the dissemination of disease and the destruction of their herds, they would be as strong as hon. Gentlemen opposite in asking that those restrictions should be continued. But they had not the fear. They sincerely believed that what was said to be contagious pleuro-pneumonia in Canada was not the type of contagious pleuro-pneumonia which some considered it to be. In fact, they did not believe it was contagious at all; and they were fortified in that belief by the strongest opinions of eminent veterinary surgeons who were second to none in the world in their knowledge of cattle diseases. The hon. Gentleman who last spoke said there had been 79 cases in Scotland from the outbreak to which he had referred. That he denied. There were supposed to be two cases, but the cattle which were reported from these two vessels were distributed in 79 centres, and they were destroyed under the Orders of the Board of Agriculture, for the purpose of preventing any supposed danger. Allusion had been made to the correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Board of Agriculture. He was surprised to hear the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Long) speak of the representations of the Colonial Office as amounting to dictation. There was not one dictatorial sentence or word in the communications from the Colonial Office to the Board of Agriculture, and they simply summarised and embodied the views that had been strongly pressed upon them by the Canadian Government. The hon. Gentleman had quoted from a single article in a Montreal newspaper, but he might have quoted page after page from letters and statements of Government officers in Canada; inspectors, large cattle dealers, purchasers of cattle, and wholesale and retail butchers all bearing testimony to the healthiness of the herds in Canada. He was somewhat surprised when they heard so much and so often from the other side of the importance of maintaining considerations of Imperial interests that on this question they attached so little value apparently to the loyalty of the people in Canada and to the very important interests which they had in this question of the exportation of cattle. It was a most valuable trade to them. It was a trade which ought not hastily and without the greatest deliberation on the part of the Department on this side to be put a stop to. So far as all the interests in Scotland were concerned, there was a very strong feeling indeed against anything being done hastily to shut the door—and, apparently, to shut it for ever—against the continuance of this very large and important trade between one of the greatest and most important colonies and this country—a trade which had been conducted with great benefit to their shipowners, with great advantage to their large harbours and seaports, and with very great benefit indeed to the agriculturists and the landed proprietors in Scotland. Nor did he understand that the feeling in England was as unanimous as it was represented from the other side to be. There were gentlemen on his side of the House, representing some of the Eastern Counties of England, whose Chambers of Agriculture had passed resolutions in favour of the importation of Canadian cattle, and he therefore hoped the President of the Board of Agriculture would not, because of the pressure put upon him from the other side, shut this door for ever—as was apparently desired—against the importation of cattle which were believed by the Scottish farmers to be the healthiest of all the cattle imported into this country.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke) could assure the hon. Gentleman that nobody wished to exclude these Canadian cattle except only so long as they had the slightest trace of disease upon them. All they desired was to keep their herds perfectly pure and free from disease, and that was all they asked the President of the Board of Agriculture to assist them in doing at the present time. To show the great danger in admitting Canadian cattle he would remind the House of what the President of the Board of Agriculture said only the previous day in reply to a question on this very subject. The Minister for Agriculture said that cattle recently landed at Liverpool from Canada were found to present appearances which justified the suggestion of pleuro-pneumonia. And yet, in face of that declaration, the hon. Member for Dundee wished to import those cattle wholesale into Scotland, and thereby run the risk of giving the disease to the whole cattle of Scotland. The hon. Member said it was a great shame to keep out cattle from Canada, because Canada was a loyal country. But the disease did not come from Canada altogether. It had been proved over and over again that the disease came from the United States to Canada, and from Canada to this country. He quite understood that a few Scotch graziers liked to buy cheap, underbred, and poorly-fed imported animals, their object being to feed them up, and then sell them in the London market as prime Scotch beef. But they all knew that there was a great difference between prime Scotch beef and those ill-bred and mongrel animals from Canada, whose importation into Scotland was, he knew, strongly opposed by numbers of Scotch farmers. If more store cattle were wanted in Scotland, let the animals be imported from Ireland and let the communications between the two countries be facilitated for that purpose. That would be to the advantage of Scotland and Ireland alike. The only recommendation of Canadian cattle was that they were to be obtained cheaply; but that was because a great many people would not buy them—first, because they were under-bred animals; and, secondly, because they were afraid of bringing all sorts of diseases into their native herds.

*Sir J. LENG, interposing, said, that Scotch farmers generally were of opinion that the Canadian cattle were a much healthier and a better class of cattle; that they laid on flesh much more quickly, and were in every way better, as stores, than the Irish cattle.

Mr. JEFFREYS said, he could not agree with the hon. Member. He had never bought Canadian cattle himself, but he had seen them frequently, and was astonished at their under-bred appearance. Agriculturists in England thanked the Minister for Agriculture for the position which he had taken up in connection with this matter, for if disease were now to attack their herds in the present depressed state of agriculture they would soon be completely ruined.

Sir MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire) said, he had some practical experience in this matter. He had many hundreds of cattle on his farms in Scotland, and he had tried Canadian cattle; and he had come to the conclusion, from his experience of imported Canadian cattle, that English and Irish beasts were very much better for store purposes. Therefore, the advantages of the importation of Canadian cattle to Scotch farmers were not so great as his hon. Friend the Member for Dundee imagined. In fact, the farmers in large portions of Scotland were opposed to the introduction of Canadian cattle. He knew that the farmers about Dundee were in favour of the importation of Canadian cattle; but the farmers of the South of Scotland were not, for they were well supplied with store cattle from Ireland and England, and exported thousands of them, well fed, into England every year; and that being mainly dairy farmers they were against the importation of Canadian cattle, because of the serious danger to their herds in the case of an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia. He congratulated the Minister for Agriculture on the firm attitude he had taken up in this matter. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would adhere firmly to the purpose which he had expressed, and that before any alterations were made in the Rules now in force the House would be given an opportunity of fully discussing the subject. He was satisfied that if the matter were fairly considered in the House, they would come to the conclusion—first, in the interest of the people who required good and cheap food; and second, in the interest of the farmers, who had to try to make their rents, that it would be better to slaughter the cattle before debarkation rather than to allow them to come into the country alive to spread disease amongst their herds.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, he could not allow the Debate to close without saying a few words as an Irish cattle breeder. The hon. Member for Dundee seemed to think that they would be wanting in appreciation of Canadian loyalty if they did not throw open their ports to Canadian cattle. But those cattle, though shipped from Canadian ports, might not be Canadian cattle at all. And surely the hon. Member, who held strong views as to Ireland's political wrongs, might consider Ireland in the matter. Irish cattle breeders, while they had no wish to compete unfavourably with Canadian stores, felt that the importation of disease would be a fatal blow to their trade. Some time ago there was an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia in Westmoreland, and the cry was at once raised that it came from Ireland; but investigation proved absolutely that the disease had not come from Ireland, but from an adjacent English county. In the same way, if there were an outbreak of pleuro-pneumonia, it would be said that it came from Ireland. As any stick was good enough to beat a dog, so any accusation was good enough to make against Ireland. He thanked the President of the Board of Agriculture for the position he had taken up in the matter, but he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was satisfied whether quarantine for three months, which was the maximum period enforced on the American-Canadian frontier, was sufficient to protect them from the importation of a disease which often had an incubation of 15 months? If the right hon. Gentleman was satisfied with the period, it was more than he, as an Irish cattle breeder, could pretend to be. However, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would stand firm in his present position; but if he intended at any time to remove the restrictions, he should do cattle breeders the justice of giving ample notice of his intention, so that they might avoid all contact between their herds and the imported animals.

### LIVERPOOL WARDS.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said, he desired to call attention to the action of the President of the Local Government Board in connection with the extension of the City of Liverpool and the redistribution of the wards When the Parish Councils Act was under discussion in that House and in another place an attempt was made to give to the Local Government Board the final decision as to proposals for the compulsory acquisition of land. It was urged that the President of that Board was in his administrative, as apart from his political, capacity a strictly impartial officer, exercising his functions in a judicial spirit. The late President emphasised this attitude in a remarkable speech when he said that should the holder of the office at any time transgress this rule his conduct could, in that House on the Estimates, or by moving the Adjournment of the House, be forthwith called in question. His action was in accord with that suggestion. The facts he had to state to the House which were the basis of his complaint were local, but they had a general application. It was well known that municipal communities desiring to extend their boundaries, and at the same time alter their ward arrangements, had as an initial step to memorialise the Local Board, and that body appointed a Commissioner to inquire locally into the merits of the scheme, with a view to advising the Board of the propriety or otherwise of promoting in that House a Provisional Order to give effect to the proposal. No subject required more careful or more impartial handling than did that of determining the boundaries of electoral areas, if confidence was to be given to the people and justice was done. The City Council of Liverpool did in November last memorialise the President of the Local Government Board, asking that the boundaries of the city might be enlarged, and that if this was approved, the same Provisional Order should, in the words of the Memorial, provide a scheme for re-arranging the boundaries of the existing wards of the city. Both proposals were favourably entertained by the late President of the Local Government Board, and under his instructions a Commissioner held a Court of Inquiry in March to hear evidence in the first instance as to the extension of the boundaries. There was some opposition at the outset on the part of Local Authorities to have their districts absorbed, but mutual agreements were ultimately made to carry out the scheme on terms arranged, which were submitted to and approved by the Commissioner. One of the conditions so determined was the number of municipal representatives to be granted to the districts to be added, and when this was arranged the parties had before them only the desire of the Council to re-arrange the boundaries of the existing wards. On this the proportion of Councillors the new and old districts should respectively obtain to each other was fixed. The Local Government Board expressed their approval of the proposed extension of the city, and undertook to apply for the necessary Parliamentary authority. The Board then instituted a public Court of Inquiry to consider the second portion of the Council's application—namely, what alterations were required in the ward boundaries of the existing city. No change had been made in these for 60 years; meantime the city had more than doubled in population, and naturally great changes in the comparative population of the wards had arisen. For many years everyone in Liverpool had admitted the anomalies and unsatisfactory condition of their ward system, but as politics ruled all elections to the Town Councils, and the smaller wards were in the hands mainly of one Party, so the political Parties failed to obtain the majority of Councillors necessary for providing a scheme of distribution. There were 16 wards in Liverpool returning 48 Councillors, with an aggregate electorate of 77,000, and apportionment of the electors to Councillors was so unequal that on one extreme 700 electors had three representatives, whilst at the top of the scale 26,000 electors only had the same number of members. That it was a burning Party question the House would understand when he said that four wards containing 54,000 electors had only 12 members, who were all Unionists, whilst 23,000 electors in the smaller wards had 36 representatives, of whom only nine were Unionists. This preponderance of one Party representing the small wards controlled the Council, and they had very naturally been loth, in spite of their advocacy of the "One Man One Vote" principle, to change a state of matters so much to their advantage. However, last year both Parties agreed to the necessity of an extension of the boundaries of the city, and thus had an opportunity, as they supposed, of securing the impartial and independent aid of a Government Commissioner to carry out both objects and with justice to all parties. On the eve of the ward inquiry the City Council by a party resolution, carried by 33 members representing 20,000 electors (the theoretical supporters of the One Man One Vote Party) against 27 Councillors who represented 60,000 electors, put forward a plan not for re-arranging the existing wards but for increasing the number of wards. Naturally the new districts objected to this, as it destroyed the relative proportion of Councillors between the old and added portions of the city, and was a breach of agreement made with them. Evidence was heard by the Commissioner. His attention was also called to the unfair allotment of Councillors which the scheme gave even amongst the electors of the present city. For example, it gave to the supporters of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division a Councillor to every 650 electors, whilst in the Everton Division a Councillor was called upon to represent 1,400 electors.

In regard to rating, the same ludicrous political partiality was exhibited. When rating told against the dominant Party it was ignored, but when it was favourable it was adopted. All points were brought before the Commissioner, who himself said, in the course of the inquiry—

> "If the Corporation had intended to alter the number of wards I think it should have been stated in the recommendation."

The advocate for the City Council who supported the plan which he had been criticising wound up the proceedings by saying,

> "I must leave the question in your hands as to how these words ought to be re-arranged; what principle is to be adopted in carrying out that arrangement."

He also added that

> "He felt sure the Commissioner would give such effect to the representations which had been made to him as he, in his opinion, would think right and in the best interests of the City of Liverpool."

To his mind, nothing could have been more straightforward than this promised acceptance of the decision of the Commissioner. The Commissioner of the Local Government Board, General Carey, a most competent and experienced expert in these inquiries, had stated that he prepared before he entered upon the inquiry, in accordance with instructions from the Board, a ward scheme on the basis of 16 wards for the existing city, with boundaries entirely irrespective of those proposed by the City Council. After the inquiry so satisfied, no doubt, was he of the fairness of this scheme that he made no attempt to prepare another, but simply completed his plan and submitted it to the Board. Immediately, however, on the conclusion of the inquiry by the Commissioner some members of the political Party now in the majority in the City Council of Liverpool, fearing, no doubt, that their gerrymandering scheme was in jeopardy, and then there would be an end to their power in the city, despatched one of their number to London to do what is known in America as "lobbying." How far the extraordinary decision which the Local Government Board had given, and to which he would shortly refer, was influenced by the representations made through this Party emissary he was not in a position to say. He had now brought his case up to the point when it came into the hands of the President of the Local Government Board for decision. That right hon. Gentleman had entirely ignored the Report of his Commissioner and the instructions which he gave him, and in a letter dated the 22nd of May had communicated to the City Council of Liverpool that he felt precluded from proceeding with the Provisional Order for extending the boundaries until some agreement had been come to on the subject of the wards between the City Council and the authorities in the proposed extension as to the representation of the existing city. This conclusion of the right hon. Gentleman was in effect to decline to discharge the very duties for which his Department existed. He relegated to a body composed mainly of his political supporters a duty which it was incumbent upon him—not as a political officer, but as a judicial administrator—to perform. To leave the matter to the determination of the City Council is to say to the minority on that body, who represent so large a majority of the electors, "I leave you in the hands of your political opponents. I will not exercise the power the law imposes upon me and prepare such a scheme as I think just, which you can accept or not as you think proper." In his letter he refers to a "misunderstanding," but the very object of a Commissioner's inquiry—with the Local Board as an Appeal Court—was to hear and determine the merits of the case. The City Council had in express words through their advocate asked the Local Government Board to prepare its own scheme if it thought proper. The Commissioner had prepared a scheme which the President had set aside. The right hon. Gentleman might say he had only postponed the question. Who was to put him in motion? Certainly not the majority in the City Council, who now knew the fate in store for them under the scheme. And so the matter would drop and a small minority of ratepayers continue to govern the large majority. Important works of a sanitary character were held in abeyance pending a decision as to what authority would have to carry them out. By the delay confusion would also be created in regard to the elections under the Parish Councils Bill. Had the President settled the municipal ward question no doubt the same boundaries would have been adopted for the wards of the Parish Councils. As it was, there would be confusion, trouble, and cost through there being different areas for the Parish Council and the City Council elections. In conclusion, he asked the President of the Local Government Board to reconsider the whole circumstances of the case, and instead of placing a matter, upon which the daily life, health, comfort, and welfare of hundreds of thousands of people depended, upon the shoulders of a body which regarded the matter only from a political standpoint, to himself adjudicate upon the question in his judicial capacity as the Parliamentary officer entrusted with the duty of determining the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I am very sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has not had a better opportunity of making his statement, and that I myself have not had a better opportunity of replying, not merely to the statement which the right hon. Gentleman had just made, but to the far more serious, important, and altogether unprecedented speech which the right hon. Gentleman made against me at Liverpool. I am perfectly astounded that the right hon. Gentleman should have addressed the House and made no reference to that speech. He has not repeated what he said at Liverpool a few days ago, and this perfectly amazes and astounds me. The House will be surprised to know that before I came to a conclusion on the case, when I had not even read the Papers connected with it, the right hon. Gentleman went down to Liverpool and made an attack on me of the strongest possible character, which I venture to say no ex-Minister ever made against another, accusing me of having been guilty of the most flagrant political job, of having dishonoured the Office which I hold, and of having been guilty of political chicanery.

MR. FORWOOD: Before the right hon. Gentleman attributes these words to me, may I ask him to read the speech?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I should like to read every word of it. The report of the hon. Member's speech said—

> "It had always been understood that the President of the Local Government Board occupied, as regards the administration of his Department, a judicial office. ['Hear, hear!'] When the Parish Councils Bill was under discussion in the House of Lords, exception was taken to any compulsory power to take land on an Order of the Local Government Board without the approval of Parliament. Lord Salisbury said, 'We are told, as the noble Lord told me, that Presidents of the Local Government Board are invariably men of honour, and you can always trust to the absolute justice of their decision. I reply that that is not the principle on which we have been accustomed to deal with the interests of the people. We are bound to look at the fact that human nature is not perfect, and though nine out of ten Presidents of the Local Government Board may be all you could wish, you may come across a tenth which may do great injustice.'"

That "tenth" was clearly intended for him (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre).

MR. FORWOOD: I was quoting.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No doubt the hon. Member was quoting, but quoting with a view of applying the quotation to him. The Report went on—

> "The suggestion that politics could play any part at the Local Government Board was most indignantly repudiated by the Radicals. [*Laughter.*] This was a basis for one of the cries in which they endeavoured to arouse the feeling of the country for the abolition of that House. ['Hear, hear!' *and renewed laughter.*] He (Mr. Forwood) well remembered the remarks of Mr. Henry Fowler, the then President of the Local Government Board, who described what would be the constitutional consequences were anyone holding his office to be guilty of any action in his Department savouring of a political job. He (Mr. Forwood) little thought when he listened to those high-sounding sentiments that within three months they would be apparently forgotten, and his successor be open to an indictment on a charge of flagrant political jobbery. No one would be more pleased than he if Mr. Shaw-Lefevre could give such explanations as would place any other construction upon the facts which he (Mr. Forwood) would now state."

He (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) was sorry to say he did not believe the hon. Member. The Report went on—

> "As they knew, the City Council applied for a Provisional Order for two purposes—one for an extension of the city boundaries, and the other for a re-arrangement of the existing wards within the city. The Commissioner from the Local Government Board first held an inquiry into the question of extension which also involved the municipal representation of the new districts proposed to be added. The result of that investigation was that the Local Government Board approved the scheme, and in March promised to put forward the Order. ['Hear, hear.'] Afterwards, on the 10th of April last, the same Commissioner came down to inquire

> into the Council's request to re-arrange the existing wards. As they knew the Council—by a parting majority—put forward a scheme varying the relative proportions of Councillors between the present Liverpool and the added districts from that agreed with the Local Boards, and arranging the boundaries of the wards in a manner best suited to the political interests of one party. ['Hear, hear.'] Evidence was heard for and against the proposal, and the Commissioner—acting in a judicial capacity—made his Report to Mr. Shaw-Lefevre. No rational man could entertain a doubt as to the lines of that communication being adverse to the Home Rule scheme of the Radicals. Hitherto it had been the custom of Presidents of the Local Government Board to accept the Reports and recommendations of the Board's independent Commissioner, based as they were on evidence and inquiries made on the spot. ['Hear, hear.'] The Radicals in Liverpool, feeling that their case failed before the Commissioner, commenced a political intrigue. They despatched one of their number, Mr. Beloe, the author of their plans, to "lobby"—to use an American term—so as to bring political influence to bear upon the President of the Local Government Board to get him to put aside his Commissioner's proposals. They would no doubt admit that Liverpool root and branch was lost to the Liberal Party unless the Commissioner's scheme was altered. The aid of an M.P., once a registration agent in Liverpool, was sought, and he (Mr. Forwood) believed, from the evidence before him, that they had succeeded. ['Shame.'] The Commissioner had evidently been instructed to prepare a new scheme on lines furnished to him, as he had within the last few days been making further inquiries in Liverpool. Instead of these fresh investigations being held, as in the former case, where everything was open and above board, they were conducted privately. Meantime as a result of this political chicanery on the part of the Liverpool Radicals, Mr. Lefevre had practically refused to Liverpool for this year, at any rate, not only an extension of the boundaries, but a re-arrangement of the existing wards. It was, he (Mr. Forwood) said, the bounden duty of Mr. Lefevre to give the fullest details of the transactions he had pictured, if he was to remain in the category of Presidents, as described by Lord Kimberley, and not prove the exception indicated by Lord Salisbury."

What the right hon. Gentleman charged him with, before the constituents of Liverpool, in the town where the inquiry was pending, was that he had listened to the "lobbying" of a man sent from Liverpool, and that he had sent a commissioner to make secret inquiries behind the backs of the people concerned, and after a full local inquiry had been held. If that charge were true it would amount to one of political jobbery. But the charges were totally without truth. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he stood by those charges?

Mr. FORWOOD: I say to-night, as I stated at Liverpool, that I should be very glad if the right hon. Gentleman could give such explanations as would prevent any idea [*cries of* "Withdraw!"] of those charges being brought against him. I accept the assurance [*cries of* "Oh!" "Withdraw!" *and* "Apologise!"] that the facts then presented had nothing to do with him. [*Cries of* "Apologise!"]

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that was no defence, because the charges were untrue from beginning to end. If the right hon. Gentleman believed in them why did he not repeat them in the House, and if he did not why did he not withdraw them? That would have been the proper course for an honest man to take. Every word of the statement was untrue, and the right hon. Gentleman had no right to make it without inquiry. There was one statement to which he took no exception—that the position of the President of the Local Government Board was a judicial position. He had during his short tenure of office endeavoured to act on that policy, and he had absolutely declined to allow anyone to approach him in these matters, or to communicate with him by letter or deputation or in person while these inquiries were proceeding. Many persons who did not appreciate his judicial position as President of the Local Government Board had endeavoured to approach him. Hon. Members on both sides of the House had attempted to do so; but he had refused consistently to enter into discussion with them; and had stated that he could only act on the evidence given at the local inquiry. He would read one letter which he had written in reply to an applicant. It was this—

> "I regret being unable to discuss with you the question now before the Local Government Board with respect to the extension of the City of Liverpool. I have felt that my position in the matter is that of having to decide judicially upon the evidence taken at an inquiry held by an officer of the Board. All parties have had the opportunity of appearing before this inquiry and of being subjected to cross-examination by their opponents. I feel, therefore, that I cannot entertain the representations in private of any of the parties to the dispute, for there would be no opportunity for their opponents to test such statements by cross-examination or to make counter-statements. For this reason, I declined to accord an interview on the subject to the Lord Mayor of Liverpool. I am sure you

will understand my position and will recognise that it is from no want of courtesy that I must adopt the same course with regard to yourself as to any others on either side who may desire to approach me on this important subject."

That has been his action in every single case. He had waited for the right hon. Gentleman to bring this question on in the House, and he was surprised that he should make no allusion to his speech in Liverpool. He accepted the right hon. Gentleman's apology [*cries of* "He has made none"], or rather his recantation. It was not true that the Local Government Board had declined to carry out the recommendation. [MR. FORWOOD: Postponed.] No, they had not even postponed doing so. They had carried out the only specific recommendation which their Commissioner made, which was not to proceed further with the scheme for the extension of the City boundaries, and they had informed the Corporation of Liverpool accordingly. He greatly hoped, however, that a settlement might yet be made, and he did not despair of a settlement being arrived at between the parties. He thought the speeches and letters which the right hon. Gentleman had been making and writing in Liverpool would not on the whole tend to an amicable settlement, but anything that the Local Government Board and himself could do would be done with a view to such a settlement. He regretted the action which the right hon. Gentleman had taken, and he hoped the House would not think he had spoken too strongly.

**MR. FORWOOD** said, that by way of personal explanation he wished to state that he had listened with the utmost satisfaction to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, and to his assurance with regard to the action he had taken, and he begged to say that if the right hon. Gentleman considered that any remarks of his reflected upon him in the conduct of his office he would withdraw them.

**MR. NEVILLE** (Liverpool, Exchange) said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman could have been under no misapprehension as to the baseless nature of his charges, because the morning after the speech referred to he was publicly challenged to state the grounds on which he made his charge. He took a week to consider his reply, but he gave no grounds for what he had alleged, and simply gave an evasive answer.

Question put, and agreed to.

## EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS CODE, 1894.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

**SIR R. TEMPLE** (Surrey, Kingston) said, he wished to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that She will cause the Evening Continuation Schools Code to be amended in the following particulars:—
>
> (1) Only one marking of the registers of attendance to be required during one session of the school;
>
> (2) In Article 13 the arrangement of a fixed grant, plus variable grants, to be replaced by one grant and that a fixed one; and
>
> (3) The drawing to be inspected and tested in like manner to the other subjects of the Code;"

and he asked the Vice President to be good enough to amend the Code accordingly. He would not go in detail through the points of his Motion, but would confine himself by putting them to the Vice President of the Council in the form of questions.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that She will cause the Evening Continuation Schools Code to be amended in the following particulars:—
>
> (1) Only one marking of the registers of attendance to be required during one session of the school;
>
> (2) In Article 13 the arrangement of a fixed grant, plus variable grants, to be replaced by one grant and that a fixed one; and
>
> (3) The drawing to be inspected and tested in like manner to the other subjects of the Code."—(*Sir R. Temple.*)

***THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL** (Mr. A. ACLAND, York, W.R.; Rotherham) said, it would be a great convenience to him and to the House if all questions concerning the Evening Continuation Schools Code could be put at once instead of being divided and put on successive evenings. With regard to the one marking of the Register the Department had offered to approve any proper plan of marking, and had invited School Boards and managers to submit plans. As to a fixed grant, he could quite believe that arrangement would be popular with those who wished to earn money easily, but there would be no guarantee that any scholar had received sufficient instruction. In reference to the last point, he was trying to establish an adequate staff of Inspectors at South Kensington, but it was not possible at present to alter the method of examination in drawing.

Question put, and negatived.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 13) BILL.—(No. 231.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### WEMYSS, &c. WATER PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.—(No. 158.)

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

### MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill.

### MARKET GARDENERS' COMPENSATION BILL.—(No. 81.)

Read a second time, and committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

## *MOTIONS.*

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### BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) ACT (1892) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dunn, Bill to amend "The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892," ordered to be brought in by Mr. Dunn, Mr. John Wilson (Govan), Mr. Renshaw, and Mr. Parker Smith.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 261.]

### DAIRY PRODUCTS ADULTERATION.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the working of "The Margarine Act, 1887," and "The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875," and any Acts amending the same, and report whether any, and, if so, what amendments of the Law relating to adulteration are in their opinion desirable."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Select Committee on Public Libraries (Ireland) Act Amendment Bill was nominated of,—Mr. Michael Austin, Mr. Barton, Mr. Brunner, Mr. Field, Sir Walter Foster, Sir Thomas Lea, Mr. James O'Connor, Sir Francis Powell, and Mr. Ross.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

### PAROCHIAL ELECTORS REGISTRATION ACCELERATION BILL.

The Select Committee on the Parochial Electors Registration Acceleration Bill was nominated of,—Mr. Billson, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir John Dorington, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Mr. Long, Mr. Storey, Mr. James Stuart, and Mr. Wharton.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

### UNIFORMS BILL.

The Select Committee on the Uniforms Bill was nominated of:—Mr. Bennett, Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Crosfield, Mr. Heneage, Captain Grice-Hutchinson, Colonel Naylor-Leyland, Major Rasch, Sir Thomas Robinson, Mr. Angus Sutherland, Mr. Sweetman, and Mr. Woodall.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

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### STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS.

Copy presented,—of Report of the Chief Labour Correspondent of the Board of Trade on the Strikes and Lock-Outs of 1892 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

### RICHMOND BRIDGE.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—Cash Account for 1893 [by Act].

### MERCHANT SHIPPING, 1893.

Copy ordered, "of Tables showing the Progress of British Merchant Shipping in 1893."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 135.]

House adjourned at one minute before One o'clock.

*An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.*

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

## *Wednesday, 30th May 1894.*

## PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL.—(No. 242.)

### CONSIDERED.

Bill, as amended, considered.

*MR. J. WILSON (Lanark, Govan) moved the following new clause :—

(Where parent twice convicted.)

"Where, upon the second conviction of the parents or parent of any child for any offence, such child has been admitted into any workhouse provided under any of the Acts relating to the relief of the poor, or has been handed over to the custody of the Parochial Authorities, such parent or parents shall not thereafter be entitled to apply to have the said child discharged or removed therefrom, nor in any way to interfere with the upbringing or education of the said child, until it has attained the age of 12 years."

The hon. Gentleman said that, although he moved this new clause, he did not do so in any spirit of antagonism to the Bill, but desired rather to widen if possible the spirit and scope of the measure, and to bring within its compass what was considered by many Local Authorities to be a very hard case so far as the ratepayers were concerned. It was no kindness to the parents that children should be returned to them, and then perhaps after a short time handed back to the Parochial Authorities. The clause would be a protection to children in cases where the offence had been committed a second time, and altogether he thought it was a very admirable one to be added to the Bill.

New Clause (Where parent twice convicted,)—(*Mr. J. Wilson,*)—(Lanark, Govan,)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. HANBURY (Preston) said, that, upon the whole, this clause struck him as a rather good one. There were portions of it, however, offering alternatives which he did not think were so good. He admitted that Parochial Authorities ought to have charge of the children of inebriates, and that the objections of the hon. Gentleman ought to be dealt with, but he confessed that there were words in the clause which he did not quite like. He felt that the detention of children in workhouses was by no means satisfactory, and that was just what this clause contemplated. It was bad that children should be kept under the surveillance of reprobate parents, but he thought it was quite as bad that they should be kept under workhouse surveillance. Where young children were brought up in workhouses the result was to leave upon them the taint of pauperism, and to start them upon their career with serious drawbacks. He thought the Parochial Authorities ought to provide for the children in some other manner than by putting them in a workhouse. There ought to be Poor Law schools for such children. In this respect a very good example was set by the Catholics of Preston, which he should like to see adopted throughout the country.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.) said, that the proposals of the hon. Member for Preston could be met if the necessary machinery existed. Such machinery did not in fact exist ; but the Amendment was directed to an existing state of things which might be improved, and he therefore hoped that the House would assent to the very useful proposal of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Govan. There was no doubt that the evil at which the hon. Gentleman wished to strike was a real and genuine one. The representative of the Barony Parochial Board of Glasgow had spoken strongly in favour of this clause, and had expressed the opinion that it would go very far to solve a difficult problem.

SIR D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said, he was in favour of the principle contained in the clause, but thought its application was a little too wide. It seemed to him to sweep away the rights of parents beyond the necessities of the case, and it was perfectly possible that the clause might offer an inducement to parents to commit acts of cruelty upon their children in order that they might be able to foist them upon the public funds in future. He had an experience of many years as a Visitor of the workhouse schools, and it was not his belief that the children were in the least degree contaminated by their associations.

**Mr. CARSON** (Dublin University) said, that nothing could be more general than the statement in the clause that for "any offence" a child might be taken out of the custody of its parents. Did the hon. Gentleman in charge of the clause mean an offence against the child or an offence of any kind? If the words were used in the wider sense, they might have a case of a man being deprived of the custody of his child because he had been twice convicted of drunkenness, however well he behaved afterwards. He thought the clause was too drastic, and he submitted, in the first place, that the nature of these offences should be limited, and, in the second place, that some method should be provided by which, in the event of a parent turning over a new leaf, he might again be able to claim the custody of his child. He would suggest that a parent, in such an event, should be entitled to apply, with the consent of a Court of Summary Jurisdiction.

**Mr. JACKS** (Stirlingshire) said, the Bill was introduced in defence of the rights of children, and he hoped that this clause would be accepted in some form or another.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** (Isle of Wight) said, he had abstained up till now from speaking on this clause, because it seemed to him to be eminently one upon which the House should come to a decision for itself. When the matter was mentioned in Committee the hon. Member for Govan only raised this matter in reference to the case of Scotland, and he understood that he only desired to have it applied to Scotland. He must say that he was not sure it would be wise to apply so drastic a clause to all parts of the Kingdom whatever the offence might be. The House had always been careful not to unduly interfere with the rights of parents, and it seemed to him a somewhat strong provision to say that in all cases where there was a second conviction, whatever the character of the offence, the parent should be deprived of the custody of his child. That clause only appeared upon the Paper to-day, and the discussion had assumed a wider aspect than he had imagined. Although he sympathised with the object of the hon. Gentleman, he did not find it possible to accept the clause in its present form.

**Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE** (Hereford) said, that if the hon. Member would limit the operation of the clause to offences under this and the principal Act, and would insert a provision to the effect that a parent should not have the custody of his child without the order of a Court of competent jurisdiction, he might be able to support the clause. It must be remembered that the object of this Bill was to a great extent to reform the parent as well as to protect the child.

**The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT** (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.) said, he would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that the clause in its present form should be withdrawn, and that the question should be left for consideration elsewhere. There was complete sympathy on all sides of the House with the hon. Gentleman's object, and all the objections that had been taken only referred to the form of the clause. He would also suggest that it might be desirable to confine the operation of the clause to cases in which the Court which convicted for the offence indicated an opinion that the parent ought to be deprived of the custody of his child.

***Mr. J. WILSON** (Lanark, Govan) said that, under the circumstances, he was willing to withdraw the clause.

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** (Kent, Thanet) said, he thought the clause contained a wider object than appeared in the Bill before the House. That proposal was one which required the careful consideration of the Government. As he read the clause there was no provision whatever which would prevent parents from shifting the burden of responsibility for the maintenance and care of their children on to the ratepayers. If it was said that the ratepayers were to assume a responsibility of this kind he must say that a mere academic discussion of the clause would be a farce. If parents forfeited their natural right in regard to the rearing and education of their offspring it ought to be distinctly laid down that the community should be able to recover from them any cost to which it became liable. He did not understand that there was any suggestion of the sort, but the matter was one that ought not to be lost sight of. Under this clause a parent would only have to be convicted twice of a trivial offence in order to render the State responsible for the future support of his offspring, which was putting a dangerous premium on misconduct which would operate in a very unfair manner towards the ratepayers and against the interests of the general community. Any interference with the ordinary rights of parents had always been very jealously guarded by that House, so that he thought these points ought to be carefully considered.

**Colonel WARING** (Down, N.) said, the right hon. Gentleman had indicated a serious blot upon the Amendment, but one which it would not be difficult to meet. Under the Industrial Schools Acts it was possible to charge parents with such portion of the expense of maintaining a child as might seem fit to the Magistrate making an order. The system that had been largely adopted in the North of Ireland, of boarding out orphan children in the houses of farmers, had been most successful and most satisfactory in every way. In the Union with which he was connected, the Guardians who had adopted this system had never had a single child returned to their charge for bad conduct or for any other cause, except one unfortunate girl, who turned out to be an idiot. All the others had lost the workhouse taint, and in almost every case the children had been adopted by the family to which they had been sent to be nursed. He believed the system was also adopted to some extent in Scotland, but was not aware whether it was in force in England. Since it had been introduced into Ireland it had largely spread, and he believed it had now been adopted by most of the Unions in the North of Ireland.

***Sir F. S. POWELL** (Wigan) remarked, that the age of 12 years is about the worst age that could have been selected. So far as he had heard, vicious parents are quite willing that others should take care of their children up to the age of 11 or 12, but after that period the earnings of the children become valuable, and such parents then wish to recover possession of their unfortunate offspring in order that they may live upon their earnings. The age of 12 was about the age at which judicious Guardians board out their children. They place them in charge of those whom they trust, who often become foster parents, and in many cases, to his knowledge, permanently adopt the children. Under the clause as it stood, the children would be left in the hands of their parents at the most critical and dangerous period—namely, between the ages of 12 and 16.

**Mr. GRANT LAWSON** (York, N.R., Thirsk) remarked that, under Section 5 of the principal Act, it was provided that in the event of persons being prosecuted for offences committed in respect of children the Court should have power to commit such children to the care and custody of some fit person until the age of 14 in the case of a boy and 16 in the case of a girl. He imagined that the workhouse authorities would be regarded as fit persons under the Act; and if this measure were limited to offences against children there would be no further protection given than was already given under the principal Act.

**Mr. DARLING** (Deptford) said, he understood that, although the clause was now to be withdrawn, it was to be reinserted at some subsequent stage of the Bill. It appeared to him that the clause would do a very great deal of harm. It provided that, if a parent had been convicted twice, not necessarily of an offence against the child, he should not have the opportunity of removing the child from the workhouse, and not of keeping it himself, but of making provision for having it brought up somewhere else. He could not see why a man should be considered, because he had been guilty of some offence, to take no further interest in his child. It might be very proper to deprive him of the right of keeping the child in his own home; but he did not see why he should be deprived of the right of arranging that it should not be brought up among paupers.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Louth, N.) said, he would put it to the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down whether they were not carrying their present tactics a little too far? There might be such a thing as killing this Bill with kindness. Some time ago the hon. Member for Govan (Mr. J. Wilson) had offered to withdraw the clause, and yet a number of hon. Members had since delivered speeches. It seemed to him that Unionist Members might be going too far in their efforts to prevent the Bill for the Repeal of the Coercion Act coming on. He would suggest to them that it might be possible, even with a less opulent display of eloquence, to achieve their purpose. He would point out to them that unless they were careful they might prevent the Bill making any progress at all.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston), rising to Order, asked whether the hon. and learned Member was speaking to the Question before the House?

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is legitimate to object to any undue discussion of this Bill, but I cannot take into account a Bill which stands third on the Paper. To discuss that Bill now would be out of Order.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he wished merely to suggest that if the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) wished to get his Bill through he had better arrange with his friends that they should indulge in a less extended series of observations.

Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the Amendment standing next in his name was one for which he assumed entire responsibility. He laboured under a great disadvantage in approaching the consideration of a Bill which did not contain within its four corners the legislation to which Parliament was invited to commit itself, but which referred him continually to a previous Statute. This section had reference to the principal Act, Section 1 of which dealt with the punishment for illtreating and neglecting children. Without having any claim to speak as an expert, he fancied he was not far wrong when he said that the Criminal Law of the land as it stood at present provided for matters like this on a general basis, and the introduction into a measure like this of exceptional and special provisions ought to be viewed very closely, for when Parliament approached a subject with a special feeling raised as regarded the admission of any category of crime there was a natural disposition to set aside the general recognised safeguards. He dared say it was possible that in many respects the ordinary Criminal Procedure of this country might with advantage be amended. He was not saying whether that was so or not, but in any serious departure it was intended to take with regard to the Criminal Procedure of the country they should proceed upon a uniform basis. It was necessary for his hon. and learned Friend, or any Member who invited Parliament to depart from the general recognised principles in matters of this kind, to show some reason why Parliament should so depart, why Parliament as in this case should make a wholesale departure from the general principles which applied to Statute Law. What was the occasion for this exception? It was proposed that upon a trial for murder—he assumed that it meant the murder of a child, though there was nothing in the clause to show that—in the event of a conviction failing to be obtained for the specific crime of murder, consequences might follow of a conviction of the accused party, not on the charge for which he was arraigned before the Court, not upon the charge to meet which he had been put to great expense and considerable difficulty, but for another charge, which he (Mr. Lowther) ventured to say ought to be the subject of a different indictment. The Statute had made provision for cases of the kind. If a person was charged with an offence it had always been held that he should have an opportunity of knowing with what he was charged. If an accused person was charged with murder — his hon. and learned Friend did not say of a child; he might be charged with murdering his grandmother, and incidentally it turned out that he had illtreated his child—the law did not hold that he might be convicted of quite a different offence. If the Bill was to be amended, now was the only time that would be afforded to this House for bringing about amendment, which he felt sure was desirable. But, assuming the trial was for the alleged murder or manslaughter of one of the children of the accused, or of a child within the control of the accused, he said it was going dangerously near to lay down the doctrine that the accused person having been charged with a specific crime, which was a felony, should be convicted upon what he thought his hon. and learned Friend would admit to be a comparatively trivial charge, and which was one of misdemeanour only. He thought it was a serious departure from the recognised principles guiding the Statute Law of the realm, and he hoped the House would not lightly assent to any such proposition. Of course, his hon. and learned Friend would tell them whether the construction he had attributed to the wording of the clause was correct; but he thought his hon. and learned Friend would admit that the construction he had placed upon the words was the natural construction that would be placed upon them by the average ignorant layman like himself. But did not his hon. and learned Friend see that provisions of this kind, if they were desirable additions to the Criminal Law of this country, ought to be a general application and not inserted here and there in the Statutes dealing with only a fragmentary portion of the law; that any such provision, which it would not be denied was a provision of very great importance, was a serious departure from the general recognised principles of the law of the country? He, therefore, begged to move that Sub-section (3) be omitted from the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3).—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (3) stand part of the Bill."

SIR R. WEBSTER asked to be permitted to say one word with reference to the discussion that arose on the consideration of the last clause. No one could doubt that very important questions were raised, and he could only say that his desire was to get this Bill through and to get it properly discussed. It was obvious that the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was one that necessarily required to be discussed. With regard to the Amendment of his right hon. Friend, he had very carefully considered this point. He could not accept the criticism of the language of Sub-section (3), for he thought it was quite clear that the words "on the trial of any person for murder or manslaughter" would be construed to apply to the particular indictment under which a person was on his trial. He would not characterise his right hon. Friend as an ignorant layman, but he could not agree that either the draftsman or himself had been guilty of the absurdity of allowing a person to be tried for an offence to one person and convicted of an offence to another. But he was bound to say that, having looked at this clause carefully, he was not able to insist upon its retention, but for a totally different reason to that given by his right hon. Friend he was extremely anxious when the discussion took place in the Committee to maintain the clause, and the Committee then was satisfied, with reference to the objections then raised, with the reasons given. But it had been pointed out to him that as he had drawn the clause he could not retain it for this reason. Assuming a man was indicted for murder or manslaughter, by the law of the land he could not give evidence, whereas, according to the provisions of the principal Act, if indicted with injury or cruelty to a child he could give evidence; and the result of this Sub-section (3), if it stood as it was, would be that a jury might find him guilty of an offence without his having had the opportunity of giving his explanation of the charge of cruelty. Therefore, it seemed to him it would not be just to give the option to the jury to find a man guilty of an offence in respect to which he might have given evidence if tried for that offence. That difficulty had been pointed out to him by a learned Friend of his who was a warm supporter of the Bill; but he thought he should be able to devise words to amend the sub-section which would get rid of the difficulty. However, he did not think he should be justified in asking the House upon Report to assist him in solving a difficult matter of drafting; and, therefore, while he desired to express his distinct opinion that some amendment of the law was desirable and necessary, he should prefer to consider the language carefully, and insert in another place, if he could, a provision that would get over the difficulty. It might be done by making it optional on the Magistrate, to give him power to allow the prisoner to give his explanation before he received any such verdict from the jury; but, as he thought the sub-section was open to objection, in the interests of the Bill, he preferred it should not be so open to objection. Consequently, subject to anything that might be said by hon. Members, he proposed to accept the Amendment of his right hon. Friend.

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk) said, that, though he was unable to be present at the discussion of this Bill last Wednesday, he felt strongly upon it, and hoped that it would not be weakened in any manner. It appeared to him that the Bill gave to children the very minimum of security, and the House ought not in any way to reduce that security. He was sorry to differ from his hon. and learned Friend who had just sat down, but it seemed to him to raise another question—namely, whether, if death ensued to the child, that the father should be able to give evidence. He thought that if death occurred that the father or mother, as the case might be, ought not to be allowed to give evidence. This sub-section had received support from the other side of the House, because he saw that last Wednesday the Lord Advocate said the Government were satisfied the amendment of the law proposed in this sub-section was entirely right, so that evidently the Government had considered the matter, and were prepared to support the sub-section. If the sub-section was not carried what would happen? A man who had been guilty of cruelty to a child that resulted in the death of the child might be tried for murder or manslaughter, and get off on a mere technicality, because there could not be an indictment charging him with cruelty to the child, for the miserable technical reason that one was a misdemeanour and the other was a felony. He quite understood the objection to putting a man upon his trial for anything of which he had not had notice. If it appeared during the case that a man had been guilty of some other crime, he did not think it was right he should then and there be charged and put upon his trial for an offence of which he had had no notice. For instance, if a man was being tried and two women came to give evidence against him, but could not because it was then discovered they had both been married to him, it would not be right then and there that he should be convicted of bigamy. But in this case a man was charged with assaults upon the child that had resulted in the death of the child; that was the charge he had come prepared to meet, and if the charge of murder or manslaughter broke down, he had had all the evidence given before him that he ought to have of attacking and assaulting the child, and if the Court was satisfied from the evidence heard that the man was guilty of an offence against the child he ought not to escape upon a technicality. He hoped the sub-section would be maintained, otherwise the man would have to be put upon his trial again, and the same evidence given over again. It appeared to him it would be well to avoid that expense.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) said, that as his name was on the back of the Bill, he might be allowed to say he earnestly hoped that his hon. and learned Friend would be able, if this sub-section was withdrawn, to ensure in another place, and before the Bill became law, that some provision might be imported into it that would secure the same result which, in his judgment, was indispensable to the success of any such reform as that now before the House. The hon. Member for the Isle of Thanet (Mr. J. Lowther), in a very closely argued speech in support of his views, said the House ought to be very careful not to depart from the recognised procedure of our Criminal Law, and the House must be very jealous how it interfered with what he called having authority over the child. If there was to be all this resistance to altering the law, he wished to know why they were engaged on a Wednesday afternoon upon a Bill for the prevention of cruelty to children? It was because the law did not secure what they required; that, therefore, they wished to alter the law, and he earnestly hoped it would be possible for the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) to get a clause inserted in another place that would not be open to the legal, the almost subtle objection of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. DARLING said, it appeared to him that this clause really introduced a most monstrous novelty into their Criminal Procedure. Here it was proposed that if a man was indicted for murder, and it turned out the person to whom the indictment related was not dead at all, but was alive, that person should not thereupon have the right of being acquitted, but that he should be convicted of an offence under an Act of Parliament which related to something that did not necessitate the death of the victim at all. Here a man who had been guilty of such an assault, or assaults, that exposed him to proceedings under the original Act might be indicted for murder, though the child was ascertained not to be dead. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Section 1 of the principal Act defined the offence clearly, and if a person was guilty of the offence there defined he ought to be indicted for it; but this clause said that if he was guilty of cruelty he might, nevertheless, be indicted for murder or manslaughter, and that if it turned out the person was not dead he should be convicted of an offence under the section of the principal Act. See the injustice of it! If a person was indicted for the offence of cruelty he could plead guilty, and would probably not go to any expense to get himself defended, but if he was indicted for murder he would have to go to all the expense of a defence for what might turn out to be the comparatively minor offence under Section 1 of the principal Act. It appeared to him the Criminal Law was right when it demanded a man should be tried and indicted for all the offences he had committed; it was also right, in order to guard against abuse by technicalities, to make the alterations in the law which had been made up to the present. They had never yet gone the length of saying they might bring against a man a criminal charge; and when it turned out that the first element of a criminal charge was not proved against him—that was to say, that the victim was not dead—he was to be liable to conviction for another offence. He hoped that would not be permitted in any shape or form.

*Mr. MATTHEWS (Birmingham, E.) said, he was not sure the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down was right in his suggestion that a man could be indicted for the murder of a child who was alive; and that the case might proceed, and evidence be given of acts of cruelty which would enable a conviction to take place under the principal Act. That seemed to him a very far-fetched proposition. But at the same time he thought his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster) was perfectly right in amending this sub-section. He assumed they were dealing with the case of the death of a child, and he thought it was a very wise principle that where death had occurred it should be put to the jury, ay or no, to say whether there had been murder. *Primâ facie*, in the eye of the law, the death of one person caused by another was murder, and the responsibility of that death was fixed by the law, and must be, if evaded at all, evaded only by showing that the circumstances did not amount to criminal homicide. There was one exception, and that was the murder of an infant by a mother. As the House was aware, if on the trial of a woman for murder of an infant it should appear that the child was recently born, and that she endeavoured to conceal the birth, the jury could find a verdict of concealment of birth instead of one of murder. Those were cases in which there was very much sympathy for the woman charged and which had led to the enactment. Anyone who had watched these charges would know that this loophole very often led to an evasion of justice, and he should be very sorry to see this loophole given in cases of cruelty to children. Where the death of a child had ensued after cruelty practised upon the child he thought it was proper and desirable it should be put to the jury to say "ay" or "no" whether that death was criminally caused. Another reason for omitting the sub-section was that it would deprive the accused of the right to give evidence to rebut the charge of cruelty. There were few cases in which it was more important that the accused person should be able to give evidence than in these cases of cruelty to children. The shades of distinction between necessary correction of a perverse and forward child and cruelty to an innocent child were very fine. The distinctions might run into matters of considerable delicacy and difficulty. Almost always it would happen that the parent was the only person who could explain the circumstances, and his evidence was most important in order to show whether his conduct amounted to cruel treatment or whether it was possibly harsh or just correction by a parent to an ill-conducted child. Then the sub-section would also deprive the accused person of the right of appeal, which under the principal Act he now enjoyed. Upon these grounds he thought his hon. and learned Friend had exercised a wise discretion in withdrawing the sub-section.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.) thought it was reasonable that the Debate upon this particular Amendment should now be brought to a close. Some reference had been made to the position taken up by the Government in this matter. They were in entire sympathy with the object of the clause as drawn by his hon. and learned Friend. He did not think these were cases in which juries were in the least degree likely to be in danger of being misled by sympathy into finding a verdict of guilty of cruelty merely, if the facts would substantiate the larger and graver verdict of manslaughter or murder. On the other hand, he thought it was a grave scandal in the administration of justice that where a clear case of cruelty was proved, and where death was shown to have followed—that where the connecting link between cruelty on the one side and death on the other might be too weak, the jury not saying that one was cause and the other effect, the whole trial should be thrown away and that the accused should escape scot-free because of the technical difficulty which at present existed. He very much desired to see the law changed in the sense the hon. and learned Gentleman had suggested, but, as the hon. and learned Gentleman himself admitted, this clause in its present form was an unmanageable clause. They could not possibly have an accused person a competent witness if he was indicted under this Act. But not being a competent witness if he was indicted for murder or manslaughter they could not find him guilty of an offence under this Act. The moral he drew from this was that they ought not in dealing with the admissibility of evidence or the competency of witnesses to make inroads into the law they had been perpetually making in recent years, but they should adopt the only logical and reasonable solution and make an accused person a competent witness in all cases. He hoped the House would consider the matter had been sufficiently discussed and, his hon. and learned Friend having withdrawn the sub-section, would proceed with other Amendments.

*Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that it was to be desired to be understood that if the Amendment in its present shape was not agreed to, the means should be afforded, on some subsequent stage of the Bill, for bringing up other provisions to meet the case. He suggested that they required something more than a sub-section dealing with the machinery. They required to alter and extend the scope of Sub-section 1 of this clause of the principal Act so as to bring within its purview cases where death had been the result of ill-treatment.

Question put, and negatived.

Sir R. WEBSTER moved, in page 2, line 9, to leave out "any punishment under that section," and insert "imprisonment." He said, that as the Bill was originally framed and brought in he proposed by Clause 4 that in cases where there was any conviction under the principal Act, and it appeared the person charged was an habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Inebriates Acts of 1879 and 1888, the Court should have power to order the convicted person to be sent to one of the retreats under that Act. By Sub-section 2 of the clause as it stood he had also provided, in cases in which the Local Government Board approved, that an arrangement might be made for dealing with persons at workhouses or special places provided under the Acts for the relief of the poor. That Sub-section 2 was met with strong objection by the Local Government Board. He regretted that objection, though he failed to see any real substantial ground for it. It was a purely permissive section. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board suggested to him that a permissive clause of this kind would be regarded as a direction. But there were numbers of cases in which the Local Government Board had had permissive powers entrusted to them which they had never put in force, and he did not believe any such objection could be taken to Sub-section 2. But he was much more anxious to pass the main clauses of this Bill than to enter into a controversy with the right hon. Gentleman, even though he might demonstrate to him that he was wrong. The right hon. Gentleman, however, indicated to him that he must strenuously oppose Sub-section 2 of Clause 4 if it was moved, and whilst he (Sir R. Webster) protested most strongly against the action of the Local Government Board, as not being warranted by any sound reason or experience, he must accept the inevitable, and with reference to Sub-section 2 must agree to that being withdrawn from the Bill. He reserved to himself the right of bringing up this matter on a future occasion, because he could not but think that upon investigation the right hon. Gentleman would find his fears groundless and that the sub-section might have proved of great benefit. He passed now to the objections taken to the first sub-section by the Home Office. It was said that they were thrusting against their will upon inebriates who were in asylums persons who were of the criminal class, and further that they were subjecting a person to a punishment against his will. With regard to the thrusting of the persons who were convicted of crime upon the inebriate class, he thought the answer was sufficiently given to that by hon. Members who sat below the Gangway upon the last occasion, inasmuch as it could only be done with the consent of the person who had charge of the retreat, and who would be careful not to allow persons to be sent there who would in any way injure the conduct of the business of his house. He had endeavoured to meet the objections of the Home Office, not under the same kind of protest that he had ventured to make with regard to the objections of the Local Government Board, because he was assured by the Home Secretary that this question of habitual drunkards or habitual drunkenness was under his consideration, and possibly some part of that which he (Sir R. Webster) desired ultimately to see in the law might form part of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. He had, therefore, endeavoured to frame this section so as to provide the minimum, and a minimum to which no reasonable objection could be taken. He had, in the first place, in the Amendment he should move after the present one, provided that the Magistrate should only have the power of sending a person, who was going to be sent to prison, to a retreat, in cases in which he would be otherwise imprisoned. That was the object of the first Amendment—namely, to send to a retreat instead of sending persons to prison. He had next provided that any order for the detention of a person in a retreat should not be made under this section unless that person, having had such notice as the Court might deem sufficient of the alleged drunkenness, should consent to the order being made. That met the two objections taken by the Home Office. He had further provided that if the wife or husband of such person, being present at the hearing of the charge, objected to the order being made, the Court should take into consideration any representation made to it by the wife or husband; and lastly, before making the order, the Court should, to such extent as it might deem reasonably sufficient, be satisfied that provision would be made for defraying the expenses of such person during detention in a retreat. To sum up the effect of the Amendments was to give an option to the accused to go to a retreat, that he should have notice given that he was going to be charged with being an habitual drunkard, and that the order was only to be made where there was proper provision for meeting the expenses. He submitted this moderate alteration of the law to the approval of the House. Magistrates under the present Act were sending men and women to long terms of imprisonment not only with the hope, but with the knowledge that by such a course cures had been effected in many cases. By being kept in confinement for such a time persons had had their unfortunate drinking habits not only checked, but cured. It was obvious that there should be some less drastic method of arriving at such a desirable object, and he hoped this moderate amendment of the law would be accepted by the House.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 9, to leave out the words "any punishment under that section," and insert the word "imprisonment."—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. ASQUITH said, his hon. and learned Friend had very fairly met the objections of the Home Office in the Amendment he now proposed, and he, therefore, on the part of the Government, would accept it.

Question put, and negatived.

SIR R. WEBSTER moved, in page 2, line 20, to leave out from the word "that," to the word "husband," inclusive, in line 24, and insert the words—

"(a) An order for the detention of a person in a retreat shall not be made under this section unless that person, having had such notice as the Court deems sufficient of the intention to allege habitual drunkenness, consents to the order being made; and

"(b) if the wife or husband of such person, being present at the hearing of the charge, objects to the order being made, the Court shall, before making the order, take into consideration any representation made to it by the wife or husband; and

"(c) before making the order the Court shall, to such extent as it may deem reasonably sufficient, be satisfied that provision will be made for defraying the expenses of such person during detention in a retreat."

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill," put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk), whilst agreeing with the other parts of the Amendment, objected to Sub-section (a), which would render this most valuable clause of the Bill, passed without division, absolutely nugatory. The sub-section only provided that the clause should come into force when a man consented to go into a retreat. But a man could now, under the Habitual Drunkards Act, consent to go into a retreat, and by providing here that he was only to go in under these conditions with his own consent they were not advancing one step. The proposal against which he protested was making the action of the whole clause permissive. This clause was of the utmost value, and removed a nuisance to the public and danger to the child. He had frequently advocated that habitual drunkards should be put out of the way of harm to themselves, their neighbours and families, and he hoped that other Members who had advocated the same thing would support him in endeavouring to secure that this clause should be made as forcible and as far-reaching as possible, and not reduced to the minimum, as his hon. and learned Friend said he intended to reduce it. It might be said they should leave this matter for another place, but it was their duty to make measures good in this House and not leave it to another place to do this. He suggested that this clause should be made compulsory and not permissive. It effected a very valuable alteration in the law. It gave protection to the child for 12 months, the father or mother being removed for that period into a retreat. It was surely better to send them to a retreat than to send them to prison. Before a man could be sent to a retreat the clause provided that he should be an habitual drunkard within the meaning of the Habitual Drunkards Act, and surely a man who came under the definition of an habitual drunkard given in that Act was not a man who was competent to have charge of children. It would be better to remove such persons from the charge or trust they had showed themselves so absolutely incompetent to perform. It was proposed under this clause to take the evil out of the home instead of taking the child out of the home. There were other provisions for taking the children away and putting them in a place of safety. That would protect the individual child, but this proposal to put the drunken father into a retreat protected the wife and the whole family. Instead of taking the child it took the evil which would ruin the home out of the home. It might be said that they were taking the bread-winner away, but he would ask how much did the habitual drunkard earn for himself or his family? He was far more likely to take the bread out of his children's mouths in order to obtain intoxicating liquors for himself, his conduct driving away the very trade by which his children were earning a living, and it was far better to remove him to some place where he, possibly, might be converted. He hoped the House would support him in endeavouring to remove the provision from this clause which made it necessary to obtain the consent of the person before he could be sent to a retreat, otherwise they would make the whole thing a farce, and be merely encumbering the Statute Book and rendering nugatory a valuable provision in this part of the Bill. He moved to omit Sub-section (a) from the Bill.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out paragraph (a.) —(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

Question proposed, "That paragraph (a) stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir R. WEBSTER did not deny that the main spoke of the clause was considerably weakened by the consent of the accused person being required. But this argument seemed to him, to a certain extent, to be answered when they were dealing with the case of a man who had got to go to prison. That was to say, the Magistrates, having indicated to the person that the offence was proved, he must either go to prison or consent to go to a retreat, and having present to his mind the fact that some stain might attach to his character if sent to prison, he would then be the more likely to consent to go to a retreat for habitual drunkards. The fact that he might be sent to prison for three or four months, or even longer, would exercise a certain amount of influence which would induce him to avail himself of the provisions of this section. He should be thankful if the Home Secretary would agree to the omission from Sub-section (a) of the words "Consents to the order being made," and probably that would satisfy his hon. and learned Friend. He should not be sorry to see the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment carried, and he would ask the Home Secretary if the Amendment, to the extent of providing that the consent should not be necessary, could be agreed to. If, however, the right hon. Gentleman was of opinion he could not accept it even to that limited extent, he (Sir R. Webster) should not feel it in his power to support the hon. Member for Thirsk if he pressed this matter, having regard to the way in which he had been met on this Bill by the Home Office.

**MR. ASQUITH**: I cannot consent to the Amendment of the hon. Member, which would introduce into a Bill of this kind so large a change in the general law of the land as to allow a person to be sent, against his will, to one of those retreats kept by private persons, though open to inspection. If any such change of the law is to be made it ought to be made a part of the general law. The question has been carefully investigated by a Departmental Committee of the Home Office, and I have undertaken to introduce special legislation on the subject.

**MR. WHARTON** (York, W.R., Ripon) said, that a practical difficulty in this matter was the restricted number of retreats and the danger of far exceeding the capacity of the institutions to receive patients. He believed there was not more than five of those institutions in the whole Kingdom, and the accommodation they afforded, pretty well filled as they were at present, would be found totally inadequate to carry out the intention of the Amendment. His hon. Friend must wait for the legislation on the subject which had been promised.

*__MR. TOMLINSON__ said, the only justification for putting a clause of this kind into the Bill was that it would prevent cruelty to children, and undoubtedly the Amendment would have the effect of keeping children free for a longer period from the presence of the person who perpetrated the cruelty.

Question put, and agreed to.

**MR. J. LOWTHER** said, he understood the proposal to which the House was just asked to assent provided that a prisoner could against his wishes be removed to one of those so-called retreats. The Home Secretary had laid down the sound proposition that if any alteration in the law was to be made, in connection with a matter of such great importance, it should be done deliberately by Parliament having its attention directed to the subject as a whole. Therefore, he would like an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman, before the Amendment were adopted, that it did not introduce any new principle into the law.

**MR. ASQUITH**: In my judgment the clause does not introduce any novel principle into the law, except that it provides machinery which has not hitherto existed. It would be impossible, as the clause now stands, for a man to be sent to one of these institutions against his will.

Words inserted.

On Motion of Sir R. WEBSTER, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 2, line 25, leave out Sub-section (2).

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

**MR. SNAPE** (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) rose to move the following as a new Sub-section to Clause 6:—

"(3) The third section of the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution, in Section 3, paragraph (b), of the words 'other than theatres' for the words 'other than premises licensed according to law for public entertainments'; and by the substitution in Section 3, paragraph (c), of the word 'twelve' for 'ten.'"

His object was to exclude the employment of children on any premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors excepting theatres. He contended that there were a considerable number of public-houses, the proprietors of which had taken out licences, not so much for the purpose of providing entertainments for the public as for increasing the sale of drink, and it was to provide against the employment of children in such houses that the first part of his Amendment aimed. The second part of the Amendment proposed to raise the age at which children might be employed in places where alcoholic liquor was sold from 10 to 12 years. In all other employments the law laid down that no child should be engaged under the age of 11. At the late Berlin Conference the age was recommended to be 12 years, and in many Continental cities children were not allowed to be employed under that age. If there was any employment more dangerous than another in its tendencies to children, it was employment in places were alcoholic liquor was sold. Therefore, there were many strong reasons why the new sub-section should be introduced into the Act.

SIR R. WEBSTER asked that the two parts of the Amendment should be put from the Chair separately.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, after line 18, to insert as a new sub-section, the words—

"(3) The third section of the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution, in Section 3, paragraph (b), of the words 'other than theatres' for the words 'other than premises licensed according to law for public entertainments."—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he sympathised with the desire of the hon. Member to keep children out of premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors. The present proposal, however, went rather too far, and he did not think it would be possible to exclude children from all premises except theatres. The effect of the acceptance of the sub-section would be to exclude a number of places other than theatres in which alcoholic liquors were sold, against which there ought to be no objection. If any hon. Member could suggest a form of clause which they might properly accept, he would be happy to incorporate it in the Bill. He suggested that the Amendment should be withdrawn and the question raised in a more acceptable form in another place, or else that the Amendment should be taken in two parts, and that they should first dispose of the earlier part, leaving the question as to raising the limit of age to be dealt with afterwards. He could not accept the first part of the Amendment, and hoped it would not be pressed.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON hoped that the House would not accept the Amendment, which, he thought, would have a very undesirable effect. The large music-halls had become more and more approximated to theatres, and they had now many entertainments in which the presence of children was necessary, in order to properly represent the story, or picture, or scene. There was a legal distinction between a music-hall and a theatre, and therefore the exception of theatres from the operation of the proposed sub-section would not cover any of the music-halls or other places of entertainment. The Amendment would have more sweeping operation than even its proposer would, he thought, desire. He trusted, therefore, that the hon. Member would see fit to withdraw it, and, if he so desired, would have a clause carefully prepared and inserted in another place. The present Amendment, if persisted in, would lead to considerable opposition being raised against the Bill, and this would be a matter greatly to be regretted.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that no doubt many persons had a strong feeling against the employment of young children in public-houses, but the Amendment would not merely place restrictions on the employment of young children in licensed premises that were practically public-houses, but would prevent children up to the age of 16 being employed as acrobats, and so forth. He doubted that the hon. Member was aware of the very widespread effect of his Amendment. He had on a previous occasion pointed out the great difficulty which the House was placed in through having to discuss Amendments going into minute details in reference to provisions in the original Act of 1889. He did not presume to cast blame on his hon. and learned Friend in charge of the Bill. He knew that the practice had become consecrated by use, and it was vain for him to enter a protest against it. But a reference to the original Act would show that this proposal would inflict a disability on the employment of young people in circuses, music-halls, and various other places of entertainment, and would prevent parents and others from having their children trained to those employments. He was not one of those who endorsed the theory that such pursuits, if carried on under proper control, should have restrictions placed upon them by Parliament, no employment of children in a performance of a dangerous character being, of course, permitted. But the hon. Member who proposed this Amendment did not disguise his desire to put down the employment of children in the ways he had mentioned. If training were not allowed in some of these callings in early life it would be impossible for them to be carried on at all. To expect an adult to suddenly convert himself into a gymnast would be ridiculous. If such restrictions were intended, Parliament should consider proposals with that object upon the merits, and should not do it by a side wind in the form of an Amendment to a Bill of this kind. He contended that, as long as the employment was conducted in a building licensed according to law for the purpose, the people of this country ought not to be precluded from having their children trained for these callings, if they so desired. Such training was, in fact, in the nature of technical education. So far from regarding those callings with disfavour, the House ought to facilitate them under proper conditions.

Mr. SNAPE said, he was willing to adopt the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight, and withdraw the Amendment.

Colonel NOLAN said, that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had many excellent qualities, but lacked compression. The right hon. Gentleman forgot that other Bills stood on the Paper. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman served its purpose in taking up the time of the House. He moved the adjournment of the Debate.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I shall not put that Motion. I mean no disrespect to the hon. and gallant Member. I can quite understand the legitimate feelings which he entertains in wishing to curtail discussion on this Bill for the purpose of bringing on a Bill to which he attaches great importance, and which stands third on the Paper (the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act (1887) Repeal Bill). But if any hon. Member is at liberty to move the adjournment of the Debate in order to bring on another Bill the precedent would be a most serious one, as it would virtually give to the majority of the House the power to dictate the nature and order of the business which should be taken. As the matter is of importance, perhaps the House will allow me to say a few words. In 1887, if I remember rightly, the late Sir George Campbell moved to postpone the consideration of an Order of the Day for the purpose of considering some other Order of the Day, which, in his opinion, was of more importance. I then said that the Motion was very unusual. I believe I should have been right in saying that it was almost unprecedented. Since then two Standing Orders of this House have been passed or re-affirmed—the one, No. 14, providing that the Orders of the Day shall be taken in the order in which they stand on the Paper, with a reservation of some rights to the Government of the day; the other, No. 12, on which I lay special stress at this period of the Session, is that, after Whitsuntide, Bills are to be taken according to the stage of progress which they have reached. It would be obviously unfair that Bills which have reached a more advanced stage should be put on one side for the benefit of Bills which have not advanced so far and are not entitled to equal precedence under the Standing Order. I hope that the hon. and gallant Member will not press the Motion, as I should have to rule it out of Order. If the precedent were now set it would be destructive of all arrangement of business, and might lead to serious consequences in after time.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) said, that having regard to the form, extent, and motive of the present discussion, seeing that it had occupied, in the Committee stage, the whole of last Wednesday, and was now taking up another Wednesday, he desired to know whether it would be open to any hon. Member that day to move later on in the afternoon that the Debate on this Bill be adjourned?

*Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think it would be competent for an hon. Member to move the adjournment of the Debate unless circumstances had arisen which would justify a Motion for Adjournment directly affecting the proper consideration of this Bill—for instance, of some discussion having arisen which evidently could not be finished for the want of information, or something of that sort. I do not think it would be competent, except under such circumstances as those, to defeat the two Standing Orders to which I have referred. These circumstances have not arisen, and I should not be doing my duty in putting the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, after line 18, to insert, as a new sub-section, the words,—

"(3) The third section of the principal Act shall be amended by the substitution, in Section 3, paragraph (c), of the word 'twelve' for ten.'"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. WEBSTER said, he was prepared to accept the second part of the hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Snape's) Amendment, on the understanding that he proposed only to raise the age from 10 to

11 years. The House would remember that since the principal Act was passed in 1889 an Education Act had dealt with the ages at which children should be employed, and he would therefore be quite willing if the House thought right to substitute "11" for "12" in the subsection.

**Mr. J. LOWTHER** pointed out that the Amendment was of a more serious character than might be at first supposed. A frequent form of occupation for the rising generation among the poorer classes was that of selling and delivering newspapers and similar employments, and he thought if hon. Members would consult their constituents in many large towns upon the matter they would find considerable jealousy shown against interference with the proper employment of young persons outside the necessary requirements for school attendance under the general provisions of the law. He was not prepared to say that the age laid down in the principal Act was that which should be fixed, having regard to all the circumstances of the case. However, that was the law at present, and he failed to see any ground why it should be varied in the sense suggested. Of course, the employment of young persons contrary to the provisions inserted in the various Acts dealing with children should be discouraged; but he did not think further difficulties should be placed in the way of their proper occupation. He had no objection to the age of 10 being fixed; but when the subject was before Parliament some years ago he ventured to draw attention to the danger of interfering with the reasonable employment of juveniles, especially in callings which required early training, because in many cases it would be found impossible later on to make up the time lost in gaining the necessary instruction. Looking at all the circumstances, and having regard to the enactments already on the Statute Book, the House should hesitate before altering the age fixed for the employment of young persons.

*__Mr. TOMLINSON__ said, the age to be fixed was carefully considered when the subject came before Parliament on previous occasions. The limit of age for educational purposes had really no bearing on questions of this kind. The clause was intended to meet the case of children who early in life developed some faculty capable of development, and where they were allowed to exercise it they were frequently enabled to obtain, by means of the remuneration they received, the means of gaining an education which would enable them to achieve distinction, and which their parents would be unable otherwise to afford them. The House, therefore, should be very careful not to let interference go too far.

*__Mr. T. H. BOLTON__ urged that there were many places of entertainment, including theatres, where young children were necessary for the proper and effectual representation, and it had been found very difficult, with the law at present fixing the age at 10 years, to produce many charming and interesting performances.

**Sir R. WEBSTER** pointed out, to save time, that Clause 3 extended in certain cases to children seven years of age. That, of course, had no reference to leaving children generally to run about the streets, but under that clause children of seven might be allowed to appear in theatrical and other entertainments with the approval of the Magistrates.

*__Mr. T. H. BOLTON__ was familiar with the provisions of the Act, but knew also that their enforcement was attended with considerable embarrassment to managers of theatres, music-halls, and places of public entertainment in London and throughout the country. While he entirely sympathised with the object of the principal Act, and with the intention of this measure now brought in, he thought it unnecessary to carry the restrictions so far. He agreed with the hon. Member who proposed this Amendment, that fixing the age at 11 years was not a very great restriction, but still the present limit of age was 10, and he had heard no good argument for raising it. The argument that the age had been raised for School Board purposes was not at all applicable for this purpose. Hon. Members were well aware that in a large number of cases, especially among this class, children were precocious, and had often acquired at 10 as much education as others at 11. It was not, therefore, necessary to adopt the School Board age in prohibition. Again, many of these people trained their own children, and from parental affection would take care of them. If they were to succeed in certain entertainments it was found necessary to accustom them at an early age to audiences, and to the line of life they were to follow. It would inflict a burden upon a man with a family and engaged in public entertainments to prohibit him from employing one of his children in proper cases for an entire year longer. Though this was a matter of no importance to people in the position of hon. Members it made a great difference to persons engaged in circus, acrobatic, and other like entertainments. This further proposed interference by raising the age of employment, however well-intentioned, was really unnecessary and inadvisable, and no argument had been adduced to justify it. In fact, all this kind of prohibition was being carried much too far, and those in favour of such legislation in this country should proceed with judgment and discrimination, otherwise they would defeat the very object they had in view.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the hon. Member for St. Pancras seemed to be afraid of the provisions in the Bill for raising the prohibitory age for children engaged in theatres; but he need not be in the least alarmed, for the Bill had no chance of passing.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, some people seemed to forget the struggle for existence which many poor people had in London and other large towns, and he was afraid that in endeavouring to make everything theoretically perfect, Parliament was making it harder and harder for poor people to live. Although theoretically he agreed with the Amendment, he hoped it would not be accepted, as this was not a matter which should be entered upon hastily or without considerable care and attention.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 274; Noes 80.—(Division List, No. 64.)

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he had an Amendment to propose, the object of which was simply to clear up doubts as to the continued application of certain clauses of the existing law. He begged to move it.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 26, to leave out from the word "and," to the word "accordingly," inclusive, in line 27, and insert "a licence under that section may be separately granted for the purposes of this enactment, and the powers of an Inspector under that section shall extend to any place at which the training of a child is authorised by any such licence."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he had not had not had the advantage of hearing a single word uttered by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight. Why was he making this Amendment? Surely he should have given the House some reason for it and adduced some arguments in its favour.

SIR R. WEBSTER said, he regretted that he had not been heard. Of course, he could speak again by leave of the House. It had been suggested to him by his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General whether the clause, as originally drafted, would sufficiently keep in force the powers pointed out in Section 3 of the original Act. He did not himself feel any doubt on the point; but in accepting the view of the Solicitor General he proposed this Amendment, leaving the Home Office to deal with it as it liked.

MR. BARTLEY said, it seemed to him that these additional words would enable the Inspector to visit at all times places in which a child was being trained. That might be desirable, but it was a very far-reaching clause. If the power was conferred in the old Act, he saw no reason for incorporating the words in this clause. With all respect for the hon. and learned Gentleman, who, of course, understood the law much better than he did, he could see no reason for adding these words if they only continued existing powers. But if they constituted, as he thought they did, an extension of the law, then the matter required consideration before they conferred on Inspectors the power to visit these places at all hours. This was a question which seriously affected the well-being of the families dealt with in the Bill, and it was really impossible to discuss it when the Irish Members created a disturbance over every sentence which one uttered.

*MR. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member will be allowed to proceed without interruption.

MR. BARTLEY said, it was quite true that the clause only applied to acrobats and people of that sort, but hon. Members who represented London constituencies were aware that a large number of these people lived in the poorer parts of London, and this was a matter of serious concern to them. To give an Inspector the absolute right to visit at all times the homes of these poor persons under the pretext that children were being trained there was at once a novel and a dangerous thing to do. He would like to have the opinion of the Home Secretary on that particular clause. [*Nationalist interruption.*] He did not mean to be shouted down by hon. Members below the Gangway, and the greater the noise they made the longer he would speak. Would the Solicitor General or some other legal authority say whether this was not an absolute extension of the law?

**Mr. SEXTON** said, he was disposed to agree with the arguments of the hon. Member who had just addressed the House. But he ventured humbly and respectfully to say he was not likely to advance the interests he had at heart by lecturing the Irish Members and assuming a function for which he had no special fitness.

**Mr. BARTLEY**: They want a good deal of lecturing.

**Mr. SEXTON** said, that if they were in need of it it was for the Speaker and not the hon. Member to administer it. They had sat there patiently week after week and month after month listening to speeches of the hon. Member and his friends, which certainly were not worth the attention——

**Mr. BARTLEY**: I rise to Order. Are the hon. Member's remarks germane to the Amendment?

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: I take it the hon. Member is replying to the observations of the hon. Gentleman himself.

**Mr. SEXTON** said, he was not aware that the Rules of Order were so drawn as to forbid a Member expressing in polite language his appreciation of the speeches of other hon. Members. The Irish Members, like all hon. Members, had a right to give expression to their feelings either in Debate or by inarticulate action. Now, in regard to the Amendment, he contended that it was an extension of the law, and it was one which demanded attention at their hands for two reasons: The first was, that the Bill was being utilised to occupy the whole of the Sitting, whereas it was expressly understood that only one or two special points which had not been considered in Committee should be brought up. The Report stage was being used not for the purpose of packing up the odds and ends, but to consider new Amendments sprung upon them by the author of the Bill——

**Sir R. WEBSTER**: I must be allowed to state that no single Amendment has been put down by me which was not either received or expressly mentioned in Committee.

**Mr. SEXTON** said, the observation of the hon. and learned Gentleman was open to a very wide construction, which he would not attempt to define on the spur of the moment. But it was within the knowledge of the House that the Bill was in Committee a week ago, and only a few simple matters were reserved for the Report stage. Under these circumstances, he and his friends intended to remain for the rest of the Sitting, and apply a very careful examination to every Amendment, because the hon. and learned Member and his friends had violated ordinary usage by using the Report stage to discuss questions which should have been settled in Committee. His second reason was that this Bill applied to Ireland. He was not aware that it was particularly needed in that country, and they would expect to hear not only from the Home Secretary, but also from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who had a special responsibility in Ireland, the reasons for the application of the Bill to that country. It might indeed be necessary to recommit the Bill.

**Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): I rise to Order. Is the speech of the hon. Member relevant to the Amendment?

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: I do not think it is. There is a specific Amendment before the House; but when the House comes to the clause referring to Ireland any such remarks will be perfectly in Order.

**Mr. SEXTON** said, his argument was that because the Bill applied to Ireland it was necessary the Irish Members should examine the particular Amendment before the House. He had not gathered from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight why a second licence was necessary. The Act passed five years ago received careful consideration, and why, after so short a period had elapsed, did they find it necessary to issue a second or special licence for the purposes of the Bill? Next, he wanted to know who, in Ireland, would be entitled to exercise the powers of inspection under the Bill? Would they pass into the hands of the Constabulary, or would they be confined to persons appointed by some Society? It was unfortunate that the hon. and learned Member who had obtained the Second Reading of the Bill by universal consent —for the House generally was in sympathy with its objects—should have endeavoured on the Report stage to introduce such highly contentious questions.

*Mr. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, E.) said, it was evident that under this clause any person who was training a child under 11 years of age for acrobatic and other stage entertainments would be liable at any hour to have his home visited by an Inspector under the Act. That was a very objectionable proposal. A large number of poor persons trained their children at home, and their circumstances were so humble that they would object to the eyes of prying officials. They were as much entitled to have the privacy of their homes respected as any other class of people. A large number of persons who were in this position would resent most strongly these visits, and the Bill might be made the means of a great deal of persecution and annoyance on the part of officious persons. He considered that the powers now proposed to be conferred were wholly unnecessary.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said that, although he had given general support to the Bill, he could not approve this Amendment, which really involved the application of a new form of Coercion Act to poor people. Unless a strong case could be laid before a Magistrate, he did not think an Inspector should have the right to visit the homes of the people, on the ground, perhaps, that a child was being trained in skirt dancing. It was quite possible to go too far in these matters. While he approved the general principles of the Bill, he strongly objected to authorising domiciliary visits at all hours.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) hoped the hon. and learned Member would consent to omit the latter part of his Amendment, which, to his mind, went too far.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, that some years ago, when a Bill of this kind was before the House, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the tendency of such legislation was to divide the English public into Inspectors and Inspected. That was the principle on which the Amendment was drawn, and it was most objectionable. He could not understand why so many people sought to indulge in grandmotherly legislation. Day after day some new class of Her Majesty's subjects was brought under the eye and the survey of an Inspector. The people were becoming tired of this constant interference, and he protested against it.

Sir R. Webster rose to speak——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman has not spoken twice already—once audibly and once inaudibly?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman has, of course, exhausted his right to speak on this Amendment.

Mr. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said, that as one who had humbly endeavoured to impress on the House the unwisdom of this system of the grandmotherly legislation, and had indeed opposed it for more than a quarter of a century, he was glad to notice that his protests were now receiving some attention. He would like to move the omission of this clause altogether. Why should a licence be taken out at all? There were already difficulties enough in the way of those who desired to follow any honest calling in this country, and Parliament ought to hesitate before it created further obstacles in the path of those who sought to earn an honest livelihood. Why should a parent have to take out a licence to teach his child skirt-dancing or even to turn a somersault? He would propose to omit the sub-section.

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is not competent for the right hon. Gentleman to do that now.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, that then he would vote for the omission of as much of it as he could.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 133; Noes 260.—(Div. List, No. 65.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'a licence under that section may be separately granted for the purposes of this enactment, and the powers of an Inspector under that section shall extend to any place at which the training of a child is authorised by any such licence' be there inserted."

*Mr. T. H. **BOLTON** said, he wished to move the omission of the following words in the Amendment:—

"And the powers of an Inspector under that section shall extend to any place at which the training of a child is authorised by any such licence."

He thought that owing to the form of the Amendment on which the last Division was taken there might have been some doubt in the minds of hon. Members as to what they were voting for. But on this occasion the issue was perfectly plain. The Bill proposed that wherever a child under 11 years of age was being trained, there should be a right of inspection—a right on the part of an Inspector to make domiciliary visits to see what was going on. Whereas, under the existing law, the right of inspection was practically confined to certain performances, under this section it would be largely extended, and would apply even to cases in which parents were seeking to develop special talents on the part of their own children. He thought such interference went too far, and therefore moved the omission of the words he had indicated.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out from the word "enactment" to the end of the proposed Amendment.—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir R. **WEBSTER** intimated that he would accept the Amendment.

Mr. J. **LOWTHER** said, they were interposing another difficulty in the way of training a child for public purposes, and he thought that no impediment should be so placed if the training were by a parent or guardian or person authorised by such parent or guardian. As he had before said, if a parent chose to teach his child to turn a somersault, he would under this provision, have to take out a licence. It would be most injudicious to pass an Act containing such a proviso, and he would, therefore, move the addition of words——

*Mr. **SPEAKER**: The Amendment before the House must first be disposed of.

Sir R. **WEBSTER** said, he would like to make the point now under discussion perfectly clear, as he had been put in a false position by the refusal of hon. Members below the Gangway to allow him to make a brief explanation. He was going to agree to the Amendment of his hon. Friend that the inspection in certain cases should be omitted; but he was bound to say his proposal was put forward with the assent of the Home Office, and because it was known that more grievous injuries had been inflicted on poor little children in training them as acrobats than in the public performances. It was absurd to suggest that they were dealing with such a case as that of a parent teaching his child to turn a somersault. What the Bill did deal with was the case of a child being trained as an acrobat, a contortionist, or a circus performer, or for any performance which in itself was dangerous. He only wished that hon. Members who had taken part in the discussion of the last three-quarters of an hour had had the opportunity he had had of seeing how children had suffered from reckless and careless training. This was not in any shape or way grandmotherly legislation; it was simply subjecting to proper inspection places in which children ran the risk of being injured for life. But as he wanted the Bill to pass he would accept the Amendment, although he hoped it would go forth that the Nationalist Members objected to the protection of children while they were undergoing training.

Mr. T. M. **HEALY** said, that he quite agreed that the hon. and learned Member was in a false position, but that false position was due to his own unaided efforts, and not to that of hon. Members below the Gangway. But what he had done had been to endeavour to import into the Bill, *sub silentio*, a most important Amendment affecting private interests. Had the hon. and learned Gentleman accepted the Bill in the form in which it passed through the Committee of that House last Wednesday it would have been read a third time by this time. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that he had been forced to accept the Amendment he had moved by the Home Office. But in that case where was the Home Office, and why did not its responsible head come forward and support the Amendment as it stood?

SIR R. WEBSTER: I must ask the hon. Member not to misrepresent me. When I spoke of being placed in a false position it was with reference to my not being permitted to give an explanation in the course of the discussion on the last Amendment. I have never suggested that I have been put in a false position by the Home Office, nor have I said anything which could be twisted into such a statement. What I said was that I had inserted it on the suggestion of the Solicitor General.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he had not suggested the hon. and learned Member had accused the Home Office of putting him in a false position. He thought he had made it perfectly clear that the hon. and learned Gentleman owed his position to his sole unaided efforts. But he wished to know why the Solicitor General was not present to support the Amendment? For his own part, if he were compelled to choose between the two, he should prefer the learning of the hon. and learned Gentleman the present Solicitor General to the learning of the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General. He desired to know the view of the Government on this question. The hon. and learned Gentleman had accepted the Amendment of a political ally, but the Government were perfectly independent and should give them the benefit of their advice. The House was placed not in a false but in a difficult position by the action of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight and of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General. The hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight had only himself to thank if his Bill did not become law during the present Session, and if the victims for which he had expressed so much commiseration had to wait another year for the protection proposed to be afforded by this Bill.

MR. ASQUITH: As unfortunately I was absent last Wednesday when this matter was under discussion, and was not privy to the arrangements that were then made, I do not feel that I am in a position to speak with first-hand knowledge. I think, however, as far as I am able to understand the matter, that this is, after all, merely a drafting Amendment. I do not think it introduces or is intended to introduce any change into the substance of the clause. Its only object is to make clear and unambiguous that which is not clearly stated. Under the principal Act children under a certain age are not allowed to be employed for purposes of public entertainment except under a licence, and a person employing them is liable to a penalty. The Factory Inspectors are to have the power of visiting places of entertainment and seeing whether the conditions of the law are complied with. I have not had the opportunity of studying the evidence myself, but I understand that a considerable amount of cruelty and abuse exists in places where children are trained for performances in public, and that the law cannot but prove inadequate unless it protects the children in the places of training as well as in the place of entertainment. I do not think that any Member of the House will object to a provision of that kind. I may say that it is extremely desirable that when we are making changes of this kind we should be very careful not to carry the law beyond the point to which it can legitimately be carried. I think my hon. and learned Friend (Sir R. Webster) is well advised in assenting to the suggestion of the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton), to omit this provision, because as drawn it might be construed to apply to places where it is not required, and where parents are actually engaged in training their children for the purpose of enabling them to earn an honest livelihood.

Question put, and negatived.

Words, as amended, inserted.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, the Home Secretary had stated that it was not the intention of the supporters of the Bill to interfere with a parent who was educating his own child. As the Bill was drawn it would clearly be obligatory upon a parent who was instructing his child to perform in public to take out a licence. Under these circumstances, he would propose that after the words just inserted in the clause these words should be added—

"But no licence shall be requisite for the training of any child by its parent or guardian."

Amendment proposed, after the last Amendment, to insert the words—

"But no licence shall be requisite for the training of any child by its parent or guardian."—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 305; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 66.)

SIR R. WEBSTER then moved the next Amendment which stood in his name. He said it dealt with entertainments which took place on licensed premises. When the Bill was in Committee the hon. Member for Heywood (Mr. Snape) secured the passing of an Amendment on this subject. He (Sir R. Webster) pointed out at the time that the words proposed by the hon. Member would not be satisfactory. The Amendment he had now to propose provided that no entertainment in which children were employed could be held upon premises which were licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquors without a special licence.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 2, to leave out from the word "entertainment" to the second word "the," in line 3.—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*MR. SNAPE said, that although he did not think the Amendment was as thorough as the case required, he accepted it as a distinct improvement upon the original clause. The difficulty that would arise in carrying out the Amendment would be that it would require very great vigilance upon the part of those who were interested in the matter to prevent the granting of special licences to parties to whom they should be refused.

*MR. T. H. BOLTON asked whether the hon. and learned Member (Sir R. Webster) had considered that under the Amendment if young people up to the age, he believed, of 14 in the case of boys and of 16 in the case of girls took part in an entertainment given in a concert room or a Town Hall, or any other place that had a licence for the sale of intoxicating drinks, it would be necessary to obtain a special licence from the Magistrates? "Entertainment" was a very wide term, and would include illustrated lectures, concerts, in which young people took part, and many other things. That being so, the Amendment, if adopted, would impose a great deal of trouble upon a large number of people, and he could not help thinking also that it was unnecessary. It was not within the scope and intention of the Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he thought they had now reached the climax of absurdity. How anybody in a responsible position, and having reached mature age, could at this time of day propose that whenever there was to be, say, a little bit of dancing it should be necessary to get a special exemption from two Magistrates was more than he could understand. Where was the House going to stop? Talk of cruelty to children! This was cruelty to people who were not children. All over the country, whenever they proposed to have some little entertainment, they must go to two Magistrates—and in Ireland to two Resident Magistrates—in order to get a licence. In this way they were going to regenerate the rising youth of this country. The section, if amended as proposed, would read in this way—"Section 3 of the principal Act." As yet they did not know what the principal Act was. That was modern grammar. They would have to go to the Library and when they had got the principal Act the clause, when this Amendment was introduced, would read in this way—

"Section 3 of the principal Act shall not apply in the case of any occasional sale or entertainment, if such sale or entertainment is held."

SIR R. WEBSTER: Those words do not come in there.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The hon. and learned Gentleman is very evasive in his explanation. As I read the words they are "any sale or entertainment."

SIR R. WEBSTER: Read in "the net proceeds of which."

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman read it?

SIR R. WEBSTER: It will read—

"Section 3 of the principal Act shall not apply in the case of any occasional sale or entertainment, the net proceeds of which are wholly applied for the benefit of any school or to any charitable object, if such sale or entertainment is held elsewhere than on the premises which are licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor, but not licensed according to law for public entertainment, or if, in the case of a sale or entertainment held in any such premises as aforesaid, a special exemption from the provisions of the said section has been granted in writing under the hands of two Justices of the Peace."

MR. T. M. HEALY asked if the hon. and learned Gentleman contended that was a reasonable provision? The Bill was originally passed without a word of explanation. In Committee a day was taken up with it, and they agreed to the Bill passing that stage. But now at the stage of Report entirely new and novel proposals, which were never dreamed of before, were made by the hon. and learned Gentleman without one single word of comment or explanation. So far as he was personally concerned, he thought it was the climax of absurdity to say that if he was engaged in any entertainment he was to go beforehand to two Magistrates for a licence. It might be true there were difficulties in dealing with the cases of these children singing in public-houses, but that, he ventured to say, was not this clause. This clause was, in itself, deserving of careful consideration by a Select Committee. He presumed the Legal Department of the Government had considered the matter; and did they really consider it was necessary, for the purposes of an occasional licence, to go before two Justices? So far as he was concerned, he denounced the proposition, and should vote against it; but, before voting against it, he trusted they would hear from the Government, who were responsible in the matter, some vindication of the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster).

MR. ASQUITH said, the Government had no responsibility in the matter of introducing the Bill. He understood that some objection was taken last week——

SIR R. WEBSTER: An Amendment was moved by an hon. Member opposite.

MR. ASQUITH said, he was not aware of that, but he could not undertake to decide one way or the other upon the proposition. He confessed that after the best consideration he had been able to give to the subject, although, like the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken, he looked with a certain amount of suspicion upon the proposal, upon the whole he did not think it would do very much harm. There were, he thought, cases in which it might protect children who needed protection, and he therefore thought that the balance was rather in favour of the proposition of his hon. and learned Friend.

COLONEL NOLAN thought they were at a disadvantage, because so far none but gentlemen of the long robe had spoken about the Amendment, and their explanations did not convey to ordinary minds what the effect of the Amendment would be. As he understood, if the Amendment of the late Attorney General were to be inserted, any child singing in an Irish public-house would come under the principal Act.

SIR R. WEBSTER: It is already under the principal Act; this clause does not touch that.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that if the child said she was singing for some charity she would not come under the principal Act. At least that was his understanding of the matter, and he thought it was as clear as anything that that had fallen from the many highly learned gentleman who had spoken on the subject. He had no wish to have travelling musicians and their children placed at the mercy of the Royal Irish Constabulary. He felt a great sense of responsibility upon him when he heard last Wednesday for the first time that this Bill was to apply to Ireland. He should have opposed it then, but he thought it might endanger his own Bill, and he therefore passed it over. Now that his own Bill was past praying for, he should oppose the proposition of the hon. and learned Member the late Attorney General.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 70; Noes 327.—(Division List, No. 67.)

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 5, after the word "object," to insert the words—

"If such sale or entertainment is held elsewhere than on premises which are licensed for the sale of any intoxicating liquor, but not licensed according to law for public entertainments, or if, in the case of a sale or entertainment held in any such premises as aforesaid, a special exemption from the provisions of the said section has been granted in writing under the hands of two Justices of the Peace."—(*Sir R. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman, at this hour, should bring forward an Amendment of this magnitude without some word of explanation. On the former Amendment, when it was proposed to omit the words for which these were to be substituted, he raised some objections, and he thought it would have been more respectful on the part of the hon. and learned Member if he had availed himself of the opportunity which this further Amendment gave to meet the arguments advanced against the proposal. The fact was, that his Amendment being so riddled with criticism the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think it was absolutely hopeless to defend it, and they were left in this position: that, when the Motion was put, they did not know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman called "aye" or "no," though they presumed he would say "no," as it was his own Amendment. He said that was not a proper position for the House to find itself in at the end of the day. Having addressed himself to that point, he would now address himself to the Amendment.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

### STEAM TRAWLERS (SCOTLAND) BILL. (No. 200.)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Crombie.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY desired to know if the hon. Member would, when the Bill was in Committee, agree to extend it to Ireland? It would be an enormous advantage if the Bill were made to apply to Ireland. At the present time Scotch trawlers, when they were prohibited from trawling in Scotch waters, sailed across to Ireland and intruded into the Irish fisheries, becoming a nuisance to the fishermen and an injury to the fisheries. Trawling should not be prohibited in one country and permitted in another, but there should be a similarity of treatment all round.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said, he should have no objection to seeing the Bill extended to Ireland, but at any rate he was anxious to see it passed for Scotland.

MR. CARSON said, if the Bill was to extend to Ireland its object should be explained.

MR. CROMBIE said, it was provided by the Bill that the masters of trawlers should have certificates just like the masters of coasting vessels, such certificates to be liable to suspension upon any default.

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, Second Reading deferred till Wednesday next.

### WEMYSS, &c. WATER PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.—(No. 158.)

As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 9) BILL. (No. 238.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 10) BILL. (No. 239.)

Read a second time, and committed.

### PUBLIC BUILDINGS (LONDON) BILL. (No. 243.)

As amended, considered.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 15, to leave out the words "in the month of September, October, or November."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

And, it being after half-past Five of the clock, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Friday.

## *MOTION.*

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (NO. 19) BILL.

On Motion of Sir Walter Foster, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Haslingden, Rawtenstall, and Bacup Outfall Sewerage District, ordered to be brought in by Sir Walter Foster and Mr. Bryce.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 262.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock.

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TO

# THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

## (AUTHORISED EDITION).

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## VOLUME XXIV. FOURTH SERIES.

### THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1894.

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### Explanation of Abbreviations.

Bills, Read $1^a$, $1^o$, $2^a$, $2^o$, $3^a$, $3^o$. Read the First, Second, or Third Time.
1R., 2R., 3R. Speech delivered on First, Second, or Third Reading.
Adj. Adjourned.
A. Answers.
*c.* Commons.
Com. Committee.
com. Committed.
Intro. Introduction.
*l.* Lords.
Obs. Observations.
Pres. Presented.
Q. Questions.
Rep. Reported.
R.P. Report Progress.
Reso. Resolutions.

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Vice President—Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND

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Vice President—Mr. A. H. D. ACLAND
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*International Copyright Acts, 1844 to 1866*
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  *Church Fund Account*, Question postponed (Earl of Belmore) *May* 28, 1365
  *Church Temporalities Fund*, Q. Mr. Knox; A. Sir J. T. Hibbert *May* 7, 484; Qs. Mr. Knox; As. Sir W. Harcourt *May* 10, 795; *May* 24, 1187; *May* 28, 1425
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